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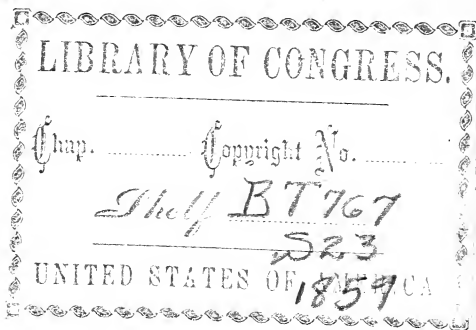
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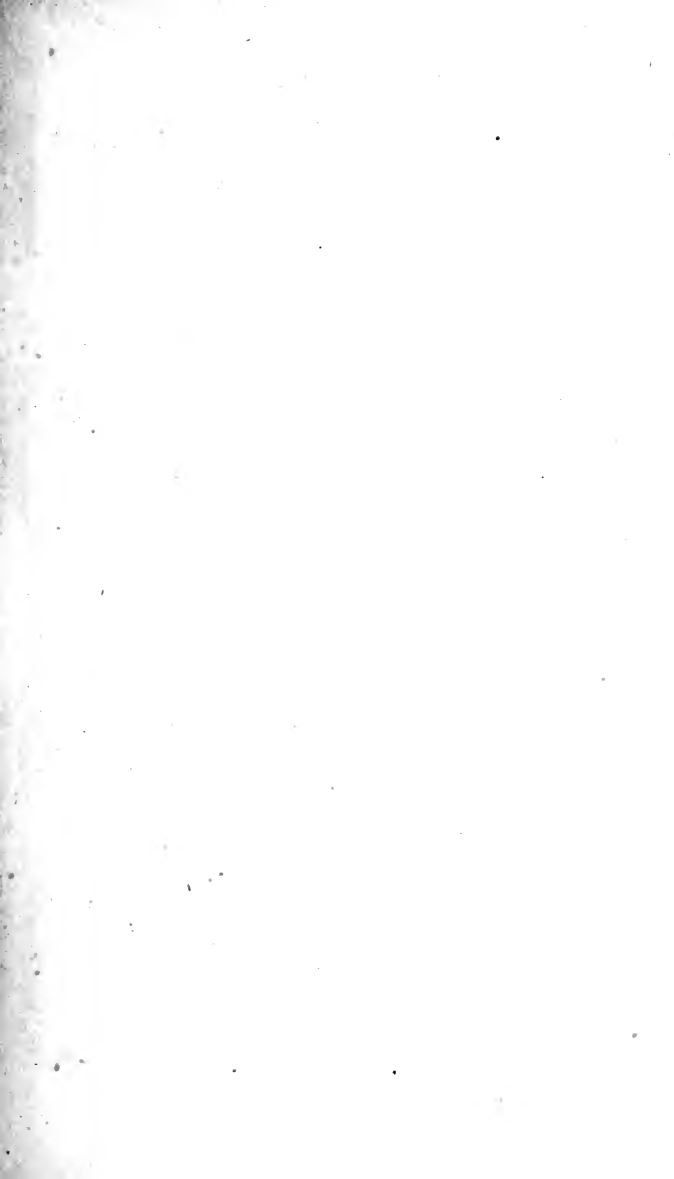
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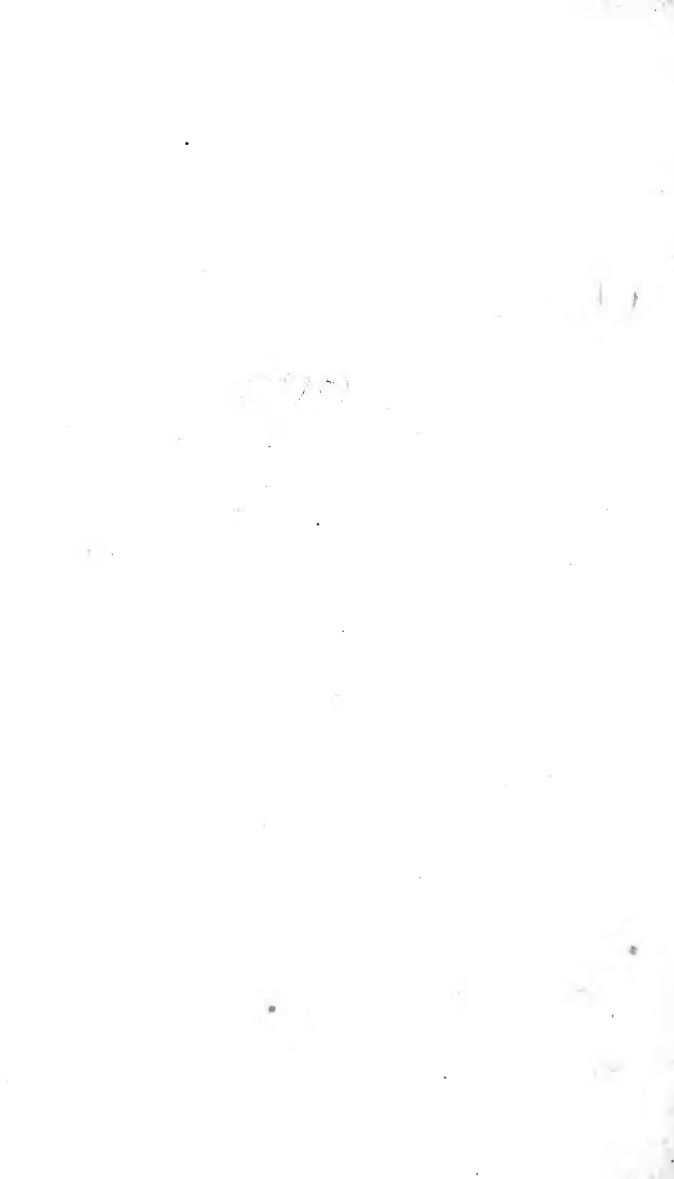
Jane A Scott
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LETTERS
ON
CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

BY
JANE A. SCOTT.

WITH AN
INTRODUCTION BY REV. WESLEY KENNEY.

Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever.

PSALMIST.

PHILADELPHIA: Δ
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TO THE
YOUTH OF THE M. E. CHURCH,

AND

THOSE OF ALL OTHER BRANCHES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
WHO DESIRE TO BE BIBLE CHRISTIANS,

This little Volume

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY THE WRITER.



P R E F A C E.

THIS little volume is the result of numerous conversations on the subject of Christian holiness, or the holiness which the Methodist Church has always held to be attainable through the blood of Christ, and the agency of the Holy Spirit; and not only attainable, but the privilege of all Christians. The aim in writing these letters was to meet objections and inquiries, which the writer found to arise in the minds of those, especially young persons, with whom she conversed. These she found to be various: difficulties were raised, by the great adversary, varying according to the mental constitution, or circumstances of the person; and often, when one was surmounted, another was raised in the same mind, so that some persons have had nearly all the temptations, here referred to, to contend with. And although they are met,

directly or indirectly, in the excellent treatises on this subject that have appeared, the answers are generally so mixed with other matter that the inquirers will not take the trouble of searching them out. The apology for offering these Letters to the public is this, many persons, in whose judgment the church has confidence, earnestly advised their publication; thought they were adapted to do good,* and would be read by many who would not read a treatise however excellent it was. If the Great Head of the Church will condescend to employ them to incite any of the youth of the church, for whom particularly they were written, to a fuller consecration of their powers to God, to a "closer walk" with him, the writer will think her time well spent, and will "give God the praise."

* The Rev. LEVI (now Bishop) SCOTT said, in a letter to the writer, "I CORDIALLY ADVISE THEIR PUBLICATION; I think them well adapted to do good; to promote the great cause of Christian Perfection."

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INTRODUCTION.

“As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation,” is a precept of unspeakable importance to all who aspire to the life eternal in heaven. To aid such is the design of this volume. In the form of familiar “letters,” it treats of “Christian holiness” as the privilege of all, who will enter into the “holiest by the blood of Jesus.” Here the understanding of the earnest inquirer is not confused and bewildered by the din and strife of controversy; but is led to regard purity of heart and life as the distinguishing privilege of the believer on earth, and as the condition upon which is suspended an entrance into “the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The polemics of the subject abound in books of different pretension from this, while its more didactic forms have been fully treated by numerous and able advocates, who have stood forth in de-

fence of "the truth as it is in Jesus." Here, without any pretensions to skill in authorship, the writer asserts the purchased privilege of believers in a style well befitting the simplicity of the gospel; and with a fervency of spirit quite in harmony with the designs of the Son of God in giving "himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The epistolary form will render it at once simple and attractive. By this means, the humble and teachable in the school of Christ, will be led into the experimental realization of a "peace that passeth understanding," without the perplexities which too often involve the subject in the more elaborate treatises upon this sublime theme. Indeed, it is our clear and well-settled conviction, that *simplicity* in the style and mode of setting forth the great doctrines and privileges of the gospel, is pre-eminently a *want* of the age. It is thus such themes are treated in the teachings of the Master and his apostles; and it is thus *all* should treat them, who ardently desire to lead the lambs of Christ's flock into the rich pasturage provided for their sustenance and growth.

It will be seen by the reader that the author

has kept herself within the well settled bounds and limits of the subject—indulging in no theories or visionary speculations, but steadily paying merited deference to the conclusions of a sound Wesleyan theology—“teaching none other things” than those sanctioned by the godly judgment of the man whom we honor as teacher of the “deep things of God.” It is, therefore, a *safe* work for the young, and well adapted to stimulate them to diligence in the pursuit of that holiness without which none shall see the Lord.

It is cause of devout thanksgiving to God that “Christian holiness” is becoming more than ever the theme of the pulpit, and the experience of the church. No longer confined and restricted to the teachings of a few, who were supposed to be setters-forth of an impracticable and unattainable experience, it is now the common theme of an evangelical Christendom; while its purifying spirit has permeated almost every heart, and baptized almost every lip, to whose ministry is intrusted “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Among the agencies by means of which it is hoped, through God’s blessing, to quicken the churches into a higher life, this little volume asks and claims an humble place. It goes on its mission with the

earnest hope and sincere prayer, that it may lead many souls to know, and to rejoice in, the unspeakable privileges of a "PERFECT LOVE THAT CASTETH OUT ALL FEAR."

W. KENNEY.

PHILADELPHIA, *December*, 1858.

LETTERS ON CHRISTIAN HOLINESS.

LETTER I.

The light of the Spirit necessary to show us our privilege—We live under the dispensation of the Spirit—We ought to seek to know our privilege—What Holiness, or Perfect Love implies—Christ's Atonement the ground of acceptance, &c. &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

It is with great pleasure, and yet with trembling awe, I attempt to answer your inquiries on the subject of Perfect Love. I would feel pleasure in aiding you in your pursuit of this invaluable blessing; yet, conscious as I am of the sacredness of the ground on which I tread in trying to do so, I approach the subject with profound solemnity; entreating the Father of spirits, and Source

of light, to aid me in writing, and cause his Spirit to shine into your heart, and to shine upon his word, and so to take of the things that are Christ's, and show them unto you, that you may be able to apprehend your high calling's glorious hope; and that you, having correct views of your privilege in the gospel, may, by faith, "lay hold on the hope set before you." This is emphatically the dispensation of the Spirit; therefore, it becomes us as Christians to examine carefully what God the Spirit proposes to do in us, lest we allow ourselves to be kept dwarfs in religion, when we might come up to the measure of the stature of a "Perfect man in Christ Jesus." You are anxious to know what this Holiness or Perfect Love, of which we speak, is, and how it is to be attained. Perhaps we cannot get a clearer view of it than by referring to those persons and animals that, under the law, or Mosaic dispensation, were termed holy. The priests were of this number, and by a reference to the account given us by Moses, we find they were separated from all purposes foreign to the

service of the temple, consecrated to that service, and cleansed or purified for it. We also find that blood was used in the purification; for the Lord said unto Moses: "And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him."—Ex. xxix. 21. Holiness, then, we see, implies two things; entire consecration and purification. In view of this, the apostle Peter calls the Christians, to whom he addresses an epistle, and all who "Have obtained like precious faith," "A royal priesthood"—"Kings and priests unto God."

My sister, is not our calling, then, a high and holy one? We are called to be kings and priests unto God, to offer unto him spiritual sacrifices. Yea, the way is opened into the "Holiest" by the blood of Jesus, and we may approach to God "by a new and

living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."

We may, yea, we are kindly and pressing-ly invited to come and enjoy communion with the Maker and Governor of the universe—the "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" because we have there, at all times, a merciful and gracious High Priest, who presents our cause and pleads the sacrifice once offered of himself for us; for as, under the Mosaic law, all preparations for office, or for approach to God were accompanied by bloody sacrifices; so, under the Christian dispensation, the individual who comes to God must plead the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world as the ground of his hope. And, I doubt not, when we examine the subject a little further and see how great are the privileges which this sacrifice secures to us, you will say with me, hallelujah to God and the Lamb! or unite with the heavenly company which John heard: "Saying, with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Yes!

worthy is the Lamb, and when all heaven's hierarchy, and all the redeemed from earth shall join in an eternal song of "Worthy is the Lamb," that shall peal through the celestial dome, his worthiness, his love can ne'er be told. Then—

"O my soul, prolong
The never ceasing song ;
Christ my theme, my hope, my joy,
His be all my happy days ;
Praise my every hour employ,
Every breath be spent in praise."

But a question arises here: What is the nature of the consecration we are to make, and by what means shall we attain to this state of purification? Christ is the sacrifice, you will say, but what is the means of purification? With respect to the consecration which we are to make, I would say it is clearly set forth in the divine word. St. Paul, in the 12th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and 1st verse, says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which

is your reasonable service." Here is an allusion to those animals which were presented to God for sacrifice under the Mosaic law. They were living animals when brought to the temple; nothing that had died of itself was acceptable; they were also free from blemish, and were the very best of the flock or herd.

This teaches us that *now*, while we have life and health, we are to dedicate ourselves unreservedly to God; to do or to suffer his righteous will; to keep his glory, and the answering of his designs in view, in the disposal of all our time; to employ all our talents in his service, whether he has given us one, or five, or ten; willing to be "hewers of wood or drawers of water," so we may be employed for him in the way he shall choose to appoint. We are to commit all choosing and legislating for us into his hands, without reserving to ourselves any right to say what he shall give, or what he shall withhold. We must renounce the world—its spirit is enmity to God—and until we are willing to act independent of its smiles or frowns, we are not

fully prepared to acknowledge Christ as our King. We are to form the determination to stand for God, in the strength of grace, at all times, in all places, and at all hazards. In making this dedication, however, we need not fear being called to renounce all rational means of enjoyment, or suppose that God will take delight in afflicting us, because we have promised that, in his strength, we will not become restive under his hand.

God is love, and cannot be indifferent to the comfort of any of his creatures; he takes no pleasure in the pain of any living thing; on the contrary, he provides for the comfort and happiness of all; and those who make an entire consecration of themselves to him, become the especial objects of his care. They enter into covenant with him, and he with them; the consecration above described is their part of the covenant; and, as his part, he condescends to charge himself with the care of all that concerns them. They that touch them, touch the apple of his eye—

“He sees their hopes, he knows their fear,
And looks, and loves his image there;”

and he will make all things work together for their good, and require them to sacrifice nothing but what his infinite wisdom sees hurtful to them.

I have now, my dear friend, filled up my present letter, and must defer the further consideration of the subject to some future time; hoping and praying that, in the mean time, you will make the subject of consecration a matter of serious and prayerful consideration, and that you may be enabled to make the sacrifice, and to lay yourself on the altar a whole burnt offering, is the prayer of your friend.

LETTER II.

The means of purification, the Fountain opened in the house of David—The blood of Christ—The Agent the Holy Spirit—He enlightens, convinces, renews, seals, sanctifies, and bears his testimony to the fact in the believing heart—Christ the Alpha and the Omega in our salvation—The act of ours that brings us into possession is faith—Its importance, &c. &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I now resume the subject which we began to consider in my last letter, and shall proceed to consider the means of purification. The Prophet Zechariah looked forward from the desolate state of the church in his day, and beheld, in prophetic vision, "A fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness."—Zech. xiii. 1. St. John tells us in his first General Epistle, 1st chapter, and 7th verse: "The blood of Jesus Christ—cleanseth us from all sin." Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, 9th chapter, and 13th

and 14th verses, says: "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" This precious blood it is which purifies our polluted souls. It is when this is applied that we become "elect through sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ." John refers to this fact when, in his salutation to the seven churches in Asia, he uses this sublime and poetic language: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i. 5, 6.

The sprinkling of the blood of the atoning animal on Aaron, and his sons, which rendered them legally clean, and purified them for the service of the Jewish temple, typified the application of the blood of Christ,

our atoning sacrifice, to our hearts and consciences, preparing us, as priests to God, to render unto him purely spiritual worship in the temple of our hearts, the place which, under the gospel dispensation, he hath chosen for himself to dwell. The great *agent* in this work of salvation is the Holy Spirit. The Saviour himself informs us of the work of the Spirit: "He shall teach you all things;" "The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth;" "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."—John xiv. 26, and xvi. 13, 15. St. Paul, also, in writing to the Corinthian Church, says: "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the *Spirit* of our God."—1st Cor. vi. 11. In another place he tells us: "It is by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost that we are saved;" and we are exhorted not to grieve the *Spirit* of God, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.

Thus, we see, the ever blessed Trinity is united in the great work of redemption, as in the work of creation. The Father, in

answer to the prayer of the Son, sends the Holy Spirit; the Spirit shows us our depravity, leads us to the open fountain, applies the precious blood of sprinkling, affixes his seal, and bears his testimony to his own work. "Here the whole Deity is seen;" but prominent, indeed, stands the Son. He took our nature upon him, and not only did he satisfy the demands of Divine justice in paying the penalty due to the broken law, and thus provide means by which God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, but his is the sacrifice that renders our offering acceptable when we would consecrate body, soul, and spirit to God. His is the blood that cleanseth from all sin. His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed: of which, if we partake not, we have no life in us.

In the earliest stages of our Christian experience, the Lamb slain is the foundation of our hope and the burden of our song; as we progress, it is the Lamb; when we arrive at the state of fathers in Christ, still we sing the Lamb; and when we shall mingle our halle-

lujahs with the celestial choir, the highest note will be glory to God and the Lamb! Jesus Christ is to us the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Now, although the whole Trinity have thus conspired to effect our restoration to the Divine image, such is the plan of salvation, that this great, this desirable end will not be answered without our co-operation; and the immediate act of ours that brings the blessing is faith. When we bring our offering to the altar faith is necessary to its acceptance; indeed, I think, we will not be likely to make the offering until we believe it will be accepted as soon as we offer it. And as "the altar is most holy, so whatever toucheth it is holy." It must not be applied to carnal uses, and the fire of Divine love will consume, speedily, whatever dross remains, so that we need not be deterred from making the offering by the consideration that we have nothing to bring but what has much remaining impurity in it. We are to bring our offering to God just as it is, and believe it will be accepted and

purified. God does not require us to bring to him what we have not to give. If we were pure, there would be no need of cleansing; we would then only have to be careful to keep ourselves unspotted in the world; but as we come to God through Christ, feeling and knowing our impurity, we are required to believe that he will take away all our dross; that he is a Saviour to his people from all their sins. Nay, more, that he *does* save us when we come to him and ask him, because he has promised to do so, and his promise cannot fail.

The reason why a great many fail to obtain this full salvation is, they stumble here at the very threshold; they keep praying and praying for a clean heart, but will not believe for it; and so, like the man at Bethesda's pool, they lie for a long time, while many, by faith, plunge into the opened fountain and experience its cleansing power. Again, others come with a faith so weak that, by its faint and flickering ray it appears to them at a great distance, and only to be reached by a slow process; therefore, they

think they must travel towards it; and after they have toiled and striven, perhaps for a series of years, they will at last arrive at the goal, and enjoy the much desired rest of perfect love; but after living for years, perhaps for many years, in this way, you find they get no nearer to it until they discover that "the word is nigh them, even in their mouth, and in their heart; the word of faith which we preach." Some of these, instead of advancing towards it after they have viewed it in the distance for some time, turn their thoughts from it, and instead of going on to perfection, they are found measuring their steps back to earth again; associating with the worldly and the gay, and retaining little of religion but the form.

You see, then, my dear friend, that faith is of the utmost importance; indeed, without it "it is impossible to please God." Then let the cry of your heart be—

"Oh for a firm and lasting faith,
To credit all the Almighty saith;
To embrace the promise of his Son,
And feel the Comforter my own."

This is the realizing light that drives away the shadows of unbelief, and clears up the prospect of the goodly land, and enables us to enter in. May it be yours. .

LETTER III.

The foundation of our faith is the word of God—Its precepts enjoin holiness, and its promises secure it to us—Its prophecies point to it, and its prayers recognize it as our privilege; and its exhortations press us on to its attainment, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

You are desirous of knowing on what foundation your faith can rest. What reason you can give for indulging the “Glorious hope of perfect love.” I said in my last you were to rest it on the *word of God*. That is the only sure foundation, and if our hopes are built on anything else, we must be doomed to disappointment. It is certainly

very important, then, that we should know whether we have a right to expect a thing before we either pray or believe for it. I believe one great reason why we do not see more answers to prayer in the church is, people pray too much at random, without considering whether they really need what they ask; and whether or not God has promised it. Indeed, so inconsistent are some, that I have heard them pray most devoutly, to all appearance, for holiness, while, at the same time, they denied its attainableness. But as you wish to be consistent and scriptural, let us search the Scriptures that we may see what they teach, and I think you will be persuaded that nothing can have a firmer basis than has our faith for this great blessing. Let us, therefore, look at the promises and precepts that are left on record for our encouragement. And before we do so it may be proper to say that, in Scripture, this state has various names: as The being perfect in Christ Jesus—Loving God with all the heart—Holiness, &c. Indeed, I believe the term most frequently used in Scripture to express

it is, perfection or perfect love. We have a right to take encouragement from the commands of Almighty God, as well as from his promises; for, we cannot think that a just and holy God would require of us a service which it is impossible for us to render; so that we may safely infer that whatever he requires of us he will give us grace to perform.

But, lest we should be discouraged by looking at the precepts alone, we will consider them in connection with the promises. Deut. vi. 4, 5, we find it recorded: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Again, Deut. x. 12, 13: "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" "Serve him (God) with a perfect

heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thought.”—1st Chron. xxviii. 9. “O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness—how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?”—Jer. iv. 14. And lest you should think that these are Old Testament precepts, and belong only to that dispensation under which they were given, hear what our Lord Jesus Christ himself says: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil; and I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, &c.—Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”—Matt. v. 17, 44, 48. Again, hear an apostle: “But as he that hath called you is holy, be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”—1st Peter i. 15, 16. Another apostle exhorts us thus: “Therefore, leaving

the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection."—Heb. vi. 1.

Let us, now, look at the promises. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."—Deut. xxx. 6. If you are ready to say this promise was given to the Jews, and belonged especially to the seed of Abraham, hear what the apostle Paul saith: "Know, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham—For ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Jews and Gentiles). And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 7, 28, 29. Here we see that faith, and not lineal descent, gives the claim to the promise. Again: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Jer. xxxi. 33. "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new Spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart

of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them.”—Ezek. xi. 19, 20. “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”—Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. This promise is exceedingly full; and it is to the latter day glory, or gospel dispensation, that we are to look for its fulfilment in all its fulness, as you will see by examining the following Scriptures. The Prophet Isaiah, in speaking of the Saviour, says: “His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men, so shall he sprinkle many nations.”—Isa. lii. 14, 15. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath raised up an horn of salvation for us—as he spake by the mouth of his holy pro-

phets—that we, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve him, without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life, was the language of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, when he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied of the Saviour's kingdom which was just at hand: and we know that that is a spiritual kingdom, and is to be set up in the hearts of believers; and the enemies of that kingdom from whom the Lord's people are to be delivered are spiritual enemies: all those affections and lusts which “war against the soul.” Our Lord, when he taught the multitude on the mount, said: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—Matt. v. 6. And to the woman of Samaria he said: “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.—But, whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water,

springing up into everlasting life.”—John iv. 10, 14. Again, in the last and great day of the feast (of tabernacles), Jesus stood and cried, saying: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink”—But this he spake of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive; and which they did receive after his glorification.—See John vii. 37—39, and the 2d chapter of Acts.

Through the whole of our Saviour’s ministry he directed his disciples to look for the fulfilment of the great promise of the Father in the outpourings of the Spirit that would follow his ascension. The last hours he spent with them, previous to his passion, were spent in conversing on this subject, and in praying for this very blessing on them, and all believers. See John 16th and 17th chap. And when they were, according to his command, assembled, with one accord, in one place, after the ascension of their Lord, waiting for the promise, the first remarkable outpouring of the Holy Ghost was given: and as the people were all amazed, and wondered what this thing meant, Peter assured them,

it was the fulfilment of that which God had spoken by the mouth of his prophets; and that this was the opening of that glorious dispensation which had been so long the subject of prophecy: at the same time declaring that the gift of the Holy Ghost was promised not only to those who now received it, but to them, and to their children, and to all that are afar off—the whole Gentile world.

Yes, glory be to God! “We both have access, through him, by one Spirit unto the Father, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”—Eph. ii. 18, 19.

Having enlarged and clear views of the extent and fulness of the promise, the apostle Paul offered that excellent and comprehensive prayer for the Philippian Church which is recorded in the first chapter of his Epistle to that Church: a part of which is: “That ye may be sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”

Mark his phraseology here: Being filled with the fruits of righteousness—no room left for the fruit of lust, which, according to James i. and 15, is sin. For the Ephesian Church he prays, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love—might be filled with *all the fulness of God*. And after this prayer, that is so comprehensive that our most capacious thoughts cannot grasp all it implies, he declares the God, to whom we address our petitions, to be “able to do exceeding abundantly *above all that we ask or think*, according to the power that worketh in us.”—Eph. iii. 17—20.

Oh that we would cease to limit his power! That our faith would take hold of his Omnipotence! But, hear this inspired apostle again on the subject of Christian perfection. I love to hear him on it; his views of Christian privileges are so large, so clear; just like those of a man who had received the gospel, “not by man, nor of men,” as he tells us, “but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father.”

To the Thessalonians he writes: “The very

God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here the whole man is included—the material, and the immaterial—to whatever distinctions, or subtilty man's philosophy may resort in defining man, the apostle here covers the whole ground; for the entire individual is comprised in soul, and spirit, and body; and all this his inspired prayer would have sanctified wholly. And after it is so sanctified his prayer continues: "I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And lest they should think, in the warmth of apostolic zeal and in the glowing fervor of a father's prayer for his spiritual children, he had exceeded the bounds of propriety, he adds: "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."—1st Thessal. v. 23, 24. John says: "If we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1st John i. 9. He also suspends it

on the divine faithfulness, which would not be pledged if no promise to that effect had been made.

But were I to adduce all the Scriptures on which our faith may rest, I might transcribe the greater part of the Bible; for, it appears to me, this whole revelation of God to man, by precept, example, and promise, enforces holiness. Holiness was included in the first promise made to the offending pair: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" and the last revelation of Jesus Christ through his servant John is wound up with a most cheering invitation to come and accept of this grace. "The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. xxii. 17.

O my sister, this precious doctrine is a Bible truth! It is not a beautiful fiction; but, a divine reality. It presents to us a most delightful prospect; but, it does not dazzle to deceive; neither does it excite in us longings for something that is beyond our

reach. The promises of the Father, the teachings, prayers, and sacrificial death of the Son, and the exhortations and prayers of those he commissioned to proclaim his gospel, all prove that it is within *our* reach. Yea, the word of faith is nigh thee—in thy mouth, and in thy heart. Oh! then put it not from thee; hold it fast as a precious boon, and the faith shall bring the power to be whole. Let your faith cling to the promise, and wait its fulfilment, and you will soon be able, with “the new heart of love, and the new tongue of praise,” to give the glory to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

LETTER IV.

Satan presents seeming discouragements—There are no real discouragements—Faith will triumph over all opposition—If allowed to exert its omnipotence, it will certainly bring the power that “slays the dire root and seed of sin,” &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I am aware that notwithstanding all the encouragement which the Bible affords, Satan will take advantage of our natural proneness to unbelief, and will present seeming discouragements. I say seeming, for they are no more; there exists no real discouragement. How can there, when the whole Trinity has undertaken the work? Can you suppose for a moment that any part of the plan of salvation will prove a failure? “His name shall be called Jesus,” said the angel, “for he shall save his people from their sins.”—Matt. i. 21. And he became God manifest in the flesh, that he might destroy

the works of the devil. Could you for a moment suppose that he undertook what he could not accomplish, or that he would become weary, and give the matter up before it was accomplished? I am sure you would not admit such a supposition. Oh no! "The Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary;" and he that trod the winepress alone, is the one who "speaks in righteousness mighty to save." Then you may say, in view of every obstacle that Satan presents—

"My soul in confidence shall rise,
Shall rise, and break through all."

Nothing is wanted but our co-operation.

But you will say, He died for all mankind, and designed saving all, though we have reason to believe many will be lost. To this I reply, he came to open a way of salvation for all, so that God could be just, and the justifier of every sinner that believeth in Jesus; but, he did not come to force any one, irresistibly, into this way. He came to procure a free pardon, and a day of probation, with

offers of mercy for every one; but not to force any one to accept this pardon and salvation. He ascended up into heaven, to send his Spirit to awaken, and convince, and sanctify, and seal those who would be led by his influences; but if, in their stiff-neckedness and their rebellion, they resist the Holy Ghost, he did not design forcing them into submission by an irresistible decree; at least, so far as he has revealed his designs to us. What he came to do, he has accomplished, and the loss of myriads proves, not a failure in the accomplishment of his purpose, though he willed their salvation. He provided for their salvation, and offers it to all—he proclaims liberty to all the captives, whom sin and Satan have enslaved; but, those who prefer their chains can keep them, and let them drag them down to eternal darkness; while those who accept the liberty shall find that, “whom the Son makes free, they are free indeed.” Free from the dominion of sin; free from its guilt; free from its defilement: “So that as sin abounded, grace does much more abound;” and as when they were the servants

of sin, all their fruit was unto death, so, when all the powers are consecrated to God, and brought under the sanctifying influence of his Spirit, their fruit will be unto holiness.

You remember I have always said that entire consecration and faith are necessary on our part. Now, that you desire to make this consecration, Satan tries to discourage you, and thus hinder you from exercising faith; and here it is that I say you may confidently and boldly assert, in the very face, as it were, of your adversary, when you bring your offering to God, I know it will be accepted and purified. And if he heap up one discouragement upon another until a mountain is formed, you may say: "O great mountain, who art thou? before our Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth and place on the headstone, with shoutings of grace, grace unto it." He can and he will enable you to stand up in all the dignity and beauty of a "temple of the Holy Ghost;" or, if we change the figure and adopt another apostolic one, this all-conquering faith will enable us to go forth, led on by the Captain

of your salvation, until, instead of from grace to grace, it shall be from glory unto glory.

Oh, my sister, as we look at it the prospect brightens; it is heaven here, and the eternal fruition of glory hereafter! Oh, then—

“Urge on your rapid course—
The heavenly kingdom suffers force;
’Tis seized by violent hands.”

Let these hindrances only cause you to rush with greater determination until you reach the open arms of your crucified and risen Saviour. Press your way through the crowd, and a believing touch will bring virtue out of him that shall make you perfectly whole of the plague of inbred sin. If any keep you from crying after him, cry out the more, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!”

“Slay the dire root and seed of sin,
Prepare for thee the holiest place;
Then, O essential, love come in,
And fill thy house with endless praise.”

And he that shall come will come, and will not tarry; he will cast out every buyer and

seller; he will erect his throne, destroy his enemies, and bring down every imagination that would exalt itself against him.

“So shall you bless his pleasing sway,
And, sitting at his feet,
His laws with all your heart obey,
With all your soul submit.”

O what a crucifixion of self you shall experience! What a sweet sinking into the will of God! How deep will be your sense of your own nothingness; and how full and clear your apprehension of the fulness there is in Christ, and your entire dependence upon him, and his perfect adaptation to all your wants! So that you will feel he is your ALL IN ALL, to an extent of which you now have but little conception. May this soon be your happy experience!

LETTER V.

The difference between saving faith and the faith we are daily exercising is in the objects to which they relate—We err in mystifying faith—The difference between general and appropriating faith—How the Spirit assists our faith, and thus increases it—Errors in praying for faith as the consequence of mistaken notions of it—An anecdote—The omnipotence of faith, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I cannot see that there is any difference between ordinary faith, or that faith which we daily exercise, and the faith that brings salvation, except in the objects to which they relate. I think we are apt to involve ourselves in great difficulties by attaching the idea of a mysterious something, we scarcely know what, to what is termed appropriating faith. We can very easily understand the nature of that confidence with which a child comes to a kind parent for the supply of any

want which he feels, when he knows that the parent has the means of supplying the want, and that he regards the thing desired as necessary and proper, and not sought after by the cravings of a morbid appetite. Or if a kind and judicious parent has promised to his child, that at a certain time he will bestow upon him something which the child very much desires, how full is his expectation of receiving it! Would anything that might be said to discourage him prevent him from coming at the appointed time to his father for the promised gift? No; he would turn away indignantly from the individual who would attempt to shake his confidence in his father's word; he is too fully assured that he has not disappointed him in the past, and has too much confidence in his word to believe that he will disappoint him now. This, then, is the faith that we are to exercise in coming to God for anything that he has promised.

Appropriating faith may be distinguished from general faith thus: general faith recognizes Christ as coming into the world to save

sinners, purchasing pardon and holiness for mankind, and freely offering this salvation to all who will accept it on his terms; but appropriating faith says, he has purchased for, and promised these blessings to me. I feel my need of a pure heart; I am willing to make any sacrifice that he requires (by his grace assisting me), in order to attain to it; therefore, I know I shall receive it, because God hath promised it. Yea, it goes further still. It says, in the language of the Christian poet—

“Saviour, to thee my soul looks up,
My present Saviour thou!
In all the confidence of hope,
I claim the blessing *now*.”

And when this is the language of his faith, there is no doubt his next exclamation will be—

“’Tis done; thou dost this moment save,
With full salvation bless;
Redemption through thy blood I have,
And spotless love and peace.”

But you think we are not always, nor, perhaps, at any time, of ourselves, capable of

exercising such strong faith. I think we are not so incapable of exercising it as we are apt to suppose. We can exercise very strong faith in a tried friend, why not in God? The act of the mind is the same in both cases; and we admit man, in his best estate, is fallible, and say God is infallible. Why, then, can we not reject, with the same contempt, any suggestions that would hinder us from heartily embracing the promise of God, that we would insinuations that tend to weaken our confidence in our well tried friend? If we have clear apprehension of the nature of the blessing that we seek, and of the time in which we are to expect it, and see that our faith has a proper foundation on which to rest, I know not what is to hinder us from believing for it at the time in which it is promised. You will, no doubt, be ready to ask me, Is not faith the gift of God; and did not the disciples pray, "Lord, increase our faith?" Why, then, do you say we may believe if we will? To this I answer, the power that the mind possesses of performing any act is the gift of God, and we may very

properly ask him to strengthen it; and it is the Divine Spirit alone that can give us correct views of the nature of what we are required to believe for, and can strongly impress our minds with the fact that God has promised those things, so that we have a Divine conviction that God has promised the thing we desire; that what he has promised he will perform; yea, that he does perform it now, while we ask, because he has promised, who cannot lie. Satan and our unbelieving hearts raise many objections when we would try thus to appropriate to ourselves the blessings of redemption, and we are dull to perceive the answer to those objections, and so we are hindered from believing by not being fully satisfied of the firm foundation on which our faith may rest; the Divine Spirit shows us the answer to those objections, clears up the difficulty by showing us the firm basis on which our faith can rest, and thus increases our faith by enabling us to surmount the obstacles that may be thrown in the way to hinder us from believing. I readily admit that, unassisted by the Holy Spirit, we cannot

do any good thing; and I keep this in view when I speak of our capability; but I hold that this Spirit is ever present to help us. That whenever we will take up the word of God, and carefully and prayerfully examine the promises that we may apply them, and believe for their fulfilment, or study the precepts that we may seek grace to walk in them, he is present, unfolding to us the mysteries of redemption, and illumining its every page, so that we see God in his own light. It is ours, therefore, to examine this subject carefully, and when we see that the word of Jehovah is pledged, we should *resolutely believe*, rejecting, as contemptible, every suggestion that may be made to hinder us. No doubt Satan will suggest, you believe just because you will believe. And did not Abraham believe thus? Yes, he believed, when at the command of God his hand was lifted up to slay his son, that God would, of this very Isaac, raise up a great nation, and that in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and he rested his faith on just what I would have yours rest, the promises of God. Ap-

pearances were against him, but the promise stood—and, says an apostle, “He believed him faithful who had promised.” You may, therefore, reply, I am determined that nothing shall hinder me from resting in the word of God, and waiting its fulfilment. This is the faith that brings the blessing, and the reason any are kept without it who are willing to make the sacrifice is, they are not willing to rest in the naked promise. If God would give them the blessing first, then they could believe; but this would not be believing *for it*. We must believe for it in order to get it, and then we can believe we have it when we feel its power.

Again, some think if God would make such an impression on their minds as would exclude the possibility of doubting, this would be giving them faith; but to venture on the promise alone, and to say, in defiance of every unbelieving suggestion, it must be fulfilled, is more than they are willing to do; and so they keep praying for more faith, and will not make that effort to believe which is at all times within their power. Now, I

think, if God would give us the blessing without believing for it, we would have as much difficulty in believing that what he gave us was the thing desired, as we have in believing for it.

The way of faith is perfectly simple; it is God's way, and we may be sure it is the best. It is the only way to the desired end; all who have tried it testify it leads direct to rest in Christ; all who say this rest, if to be found at all, is only to be reached by travelling through long and circuitous windings, have to confess that they have neither tried the way we recommend, nor found the rest. Let us beware, lest it might be said of us, when we are praying for faith, "ye know not what ye ask." In all our addresses to the throne of grace, let us be definite; that is, let us clearly understand what we ask, and use no words for which we have not determinate ideas; and let us be careful that what we ask is promised, and promised for the time in which we seek it, or else we will get wide of the mark. It was Israel's fault, said an eminent divine, that they looked for signs. Let us

require no sign but the precious promise. I have read of a lady who was seeking the blessing of justification, and after she had sought it for some time and had not found it, she began to inquire into the cause; examining the workings of her mind, she discovered that unbelief was the hindrance. She then set apart a day to pray for the faith that brings the blessing, determining to spend the whole day in prayer for this faith, should it be necessary. She did spend the day thus, and at the close of it found that her faith was not increased. Almost exhausted and somewhat discouraged, she looked up to God as her only refuge, and said, Lord, I have been praying all day for more faith, and I don't see that I have got any more than I had in the morning; but thou canst save me with the *faith I have*. That moment she received the desired blessing. There was the way the Holy Spirit increased her faith; he showed her she had faith enough if she would only venture; and let us pray for faith as long as we will, we shall have to mourn our depravity until we look up and say, Lord

Jesus, thy blood can cleanse me *now, just as I am, with the faith I have*. True, it is weak, but it grasps the promise, and rests on it; and will not let it go.

O, my sister, be not afraid of venturing too much on the word of God! Honor your Saviour by believing every word that dropped from his lips; and, if on him you dare rely, the faith will bring the power to do whatever he commands you. The smallest grain of faith takes hold of omnipotence, and becomes mighty. Then, in all your addresses to the throne of grace say, Lord, it is thy word; thou hast bid me ask, therefore I expect to receive; so shall you find your faith strengthened by exercise, until you can say, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."

LETTER VI.

Satan opposes our spiritual progress—Faith overcomes him—Personal experience of the powers of faith—This is the dispensation of the Spirit, &c. &c.

MY DEAR SISTER:—

I rejoice to find you are beginning to discover the simplicity of faith; and I am not at all surprised that your ever-watchful enemy has taken the alarm, and is determined to contend with you for every inch of ground that you gain. But fear not; Jehovah Jesus is the captain of your salvation. Hold fast the shield of faith in his name, and you shall do valiantly. You need not fear, "Though an host should encamp against you"—

"You have a shield can quell their rage,
And drive the alien armies back;
Portrayed it bears a bleeding Lamb,
You dare believe in Jesus' name."

And this name is salvation. "He came to save his people from their sins." Oh what

a great salvation! Well might angels desire to look into this wondrous scheme of man's redemption. Should not we meditate upon it until our souls become enraptured with the glorious theme, and we catch the thrilling inspiration of Divine love, which shall melt our hearts in gratitude, and tune our lips to the high praises of him who stooped to look upon us in our low estate, and to raise us into his image and fellowship? O Lamb of God! was ever love like thine? No, never! and yet how prone we are to forget it. Have mercy upon us, and pardon our stupidity!

My sister, every effort we make to believe gives us an advantage over Satan, and advances us a step higher in Christian attainment. Let us never forget this. The enemy retreats before every believing effort we make, and we take possession of higher vantage ground.

To encourage your faith, and to stimulate its exercise, I will give you some extracts from manuscripts written by one who had considerable use for this blessed shield, and

who proved its value on many occasions. On one occasion she writes thus:—

“This day I have enjoyed the Sabbath; and, oh what a Sabbath it has been! In the evening, before going to church, I was engaged in private devotional exercises, when my mind became suddenly solemnized by the thought that I was about to engage in the last public service of the last Sabbath of the old year. I lifted my heart in prayer to God, that it might be the richest season of enjoyment in the whole year. Immediately it was suggested, look at the rich seasons you have had during the year; and to look for more, oh how absurd! Your heart has been filled many times; how could you have more? To this I immediately replied, Yes, bless the Lord, I have often been filled, but my soul is capable of enlargement; my largest desires have been satisfied with his fulness, but the clearer views of God and my privilege in the gospel I receive, the more capacious are my desires after him; and there is an infinite fulness in my Redeemer; therefore, I may have my most enlarged desires satisfied, I

may have more than on any former occasion, and *I shall*, for my Lord has said, I shall be satisfied. He sets no bounds to my enjoyment of his love; his promise is, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you, only ask believing. I went to church encouraged, and full of expectation. I engaged in the service with delight as usual; the Lord blessed me at prayer, as he was wont to do; but I believed I would receive a larger measure before I should leave the house. The minister proceeded in his sermon, and my heart continued very much engaged with God, and every moment expecting an outpouring of his Spirit. Many were the arguments that Satan brought against me; but I instantly rejected them all. I was determined I would believe my Lord's word, and prove his faithfulness. It was suggested, You have been blessed while waiting, you ought to be satisfied; you are unthankful; if the Lord was going to give you more he would have given it while you were at prayer. My heart replied, I do praise the Lord; he is mine, and I am his! He is blessing me, for which

I praise him; but I know he will manifest himself to me more fully, and I shall praise him yet more. The enemy then suggested, If the Lord would bless you as you desire, some effect would be produced on your body that would attract the attention of those around; or, you would be constrained to manifest your feelings in such a manner as would lead people to think you were getting into those wild extravagancies which you think make no part of religion; and you would sooner let the blessing go, than have any person to think you are getting into extravagance of that kind. To this my heart replied, Lord, thou knowest what I want is more love, and I care not whether thou comest in a mighty rushing wind, or whisper in a still small voice; I prescribe not the manner. The sermon was over—the last prayer nearly closed, when it was suggested, You may turn your thoughts from that now, perhaps it will come after you go home; but the service here is nearly closed, there remains not time for you to receive it now. My soul was in a very comfortable state, but still expecting; and I

replied, If it be in the last moment, I shall receive it before I leave this house. Time is nothing to my Lord; he can do the work of a thousand years, yea, of ten thousand, in a moment. And while I thus waited, nearly at the very close of the last prayer, my heart was constrained to say, He is come! he is come! and glory unutterable filled my soul. No ecstasy, no sensible effect produced on my body, but an overwhelming sense of his love to me, and mine to him. Truly, my heart was 'all praise, all meekness, and all love.' Glory to God, I know that, much as I have received during the year, it was not too much to ask my Lord to let me have more; there can be no presumption in this since his offers are so free and so full. Oh yes! I shall have more, and still more until death is swallowed up in victory, and glory eternal bursts on my enraptured vision; and even then I shall go on, receiving more of those emanations of the Deity long as eternal ages roll. Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

Here, my friend, you see what a struggle was to be engaged in, and kept up for some

time; how firmly faith had to grasp the promise, and hold to it; how resolutely it was necessary to believe in this case, and how perseveringly! But oh what a glorious victory—how worth contending for!

On another occasion the same person writes:—

“My soul has lately been watered from on high. I feel that the language of praise does belong to me, and blessed be God, it flows spontaneously from my heart! I had a precious season while waiting on God last evening in his house; my soul was greatly blessed; and this morning I had great nearness to God in private prayer: but I am looking for a greater baptism from on high. The Holy Spirit is my indwelling, abiding comforter, but—I was going to write, but I am looking for him to bring into my soul more of the fulness of salvation. But glory, eternal glory be to his holy name, I can now praise him for the possession of what I was going to express my desire after. I was interrupted in my writing by his filling my heart unutterably full of glory and of God.

Oh he is mine—the ever blessed Trinity is mine to all eternity! What shall I render unto him for all his benefits to me? where shall I begin his praise? Will not ye, O heavenly host, who wait upon him continually, and who rejoice over a redeemed sinner, strike a higher note of praise on my behalf? Assist me, O ye heavenly powers, to celebrate the praises of him my soul loveth!”

“The Father shining on his throne,
The glorious co-eternal Son;
The Spirit, one and seven,
Conspire our rapture to complete;
And lo! we fall before his feet,
And silence heightens heaven.”

Yes, glory to God! I soon shall be permitted to cast myself at his feet, and in adoring gratitude and wonder to—

“Shout by turns the bursting joy,
And all eternity employ,
In songs around his throne.”

Here you see a believing look brought the blessing down before the desire for it could be committed to paper, and prayer was turned to praise. O that this realizing faith

were more constantly exercised ! We are too prone to confine such Pentecostal showers to the days of the apostles, when the dispensation of the Spirit was opened, or to some other remarkably reviving periods, when God, seeing that pure religion is scarcely to be found in the church, but that men have substituted for it a dead form, raises up faithful men, as he did the Wesleys and their coadjutors, and eminently qualifies them for the work of reviving, instrumentally, pure religion in the earth ; but we see in these instances, as in many others, that faith in God produces, in all time, the same glorious results ; and though we are often ready to say, if our Lord come, shall he find faith upon the earth ? We may rest assured that though the state of the church is far from being what we would desire, there is to be found in it very many who know that the glorious dispensation which was opened on the day of Pentecost, is the one under which we live ; and that they who now wait for the promise of the Father receive it, as did those on that day ; and if he does not sit on them

as cloven tongues of fire, he enables them, as Mr. Fletcher beautifully expresses it, "to glorify God with the new heart of love, and the new tongue of praise." They feel all its hallowing effects, and can pass through the world loving God with all their hearts, and their neighbor as themselves. And though the worldling and the half-hearted professor often say, Where are such to be found? their blessed Master can find them, perhaps, where those never think of looking for them. He said to his disciples, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you;" and these know the blessed day is come, and are not at all surprised that the world knows them not, since it knew not their Master, nor could see in the despised Nazarene, "the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." "Their lives are hid with Christ in God," but "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe," they will be known, for they "shall appear with him in glory." He will then confess them before an assembled universe—angels and

men; and he will present them to his Father as the trophies of his victory, redeemed from among men, and bearing his likeness. In the mean time you may pray—

“Make up thy jewels, Lord, and show
Thy glorious, spotless church below;
The fellowship of saints make known,
And, O my God, may I be one!

“Oh might my lot be cast with these,
The least of Jesus’ witnesses;
Oh that my Lord would count me meet
To wash his dear disciples’ feet!”

is the prayer of your friend.

LETTER VII.

Distrust of God a common temptation—God does not willingly afflict his people, though he sometimes leads them through great tribulation—It is important that we have the spirit of sacrifice—Resignation not stoical indifference—Personal experience of the sweetness of resignation—Religion hinders none of our rational enjoyment of the blessings of this life—Christ the common centre where all Christians meet, &c. &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

You are not alone in the temptation of which you speak; it is one that has tried every Christian, I suppose, that has made the subject of entire consecration one of serious consideration. It is a grand trick of the enemy to present to such the crosses they will have to bear; the innumerable difficulties with which they will have to contend; as if the God of infinite love delighted in making his people miserable; and the more so, the greater is their devotedness to him.

It is the great adversary himself that tells you, as soon as you hold your dearest friends as gifts from him, that he has a right to withdraw when he sees proper, they will be taken from you. Our Heavenly Father will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. Sometimes he sees it necessary to withhold or withdraw from us what seems to us good, and unbelief rebels; but faith says:—

“ Good when he gives, supremely good,
Nor less when he denies ;
Even crosses, from his sov'reign hand,
Are blessings in disguise.”

We place ourselves in much greater danger of having tender ties severed by retaining these objects as idols, than by offering them to God. In the former case he very often takes away the idol that he may have the heart. Does this seem selfish in God, as wicked unbelief would view it? Let us remember these hearts can do him no good; the gain is all purely ours; he is infinitely happy without us; but we are fruitlessly seeking happiness, and never can find rest but in him. So you see, however severe the discipline that

may be necessary to drive us to him, and tear our hearts from idols, is an exercise of pure love. When we are unwilling to trust him with all we hold dear, he sees it is not safe to trust us with very much; we will lose sight of the giver in the gift. As for the crosses you shall be called to bear, you will not find them so heavy, when you come to take them up, as they appear in the distance. "Love makes all things easy." If we love much, we will consider it an honor and privilege to bear the cross for him who bore it up Calvary's rugged steep for us—who suffered such contradiction of sinners against himself, when "he gave his back to the smiters, and his cheek to them that pulled off the hair;" and who in all this "bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows." The apostle Paul desired to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. We are not called to desire suffering, however, but we may safely leave ourselves in his hands, leaving him to choose for us ease or pain, life or death; and need not think ourselves nearer being deprived of any bless-

ing because we daily and hourly offer ourselves, with all we have, to God. When all is laid upon the altar, a whole burnt-offering, it is holy; it is the Lord's sacrifice, and he will take care of it; nevertheless, it is very necessary that we have, at all times, that spirit of sacrifice which enables us to look upon all as God's; and to remember that he has a right to take away, as well as to give, that we may be saved from murmuring. And let us remember that "God is love," and that whatever he does, is done in love to us. Those John saw before the throne had come up through great tribulation; not that their Lord took pleasure in afflicting them, but a wicked world did; and Satan sorely assaulted them; and they, knowing that it is enough for the servant to be as his master, were willing to follow him to "Pilate's judgment hall, or to an ignominious Calvary." And now that all their toils are past, think you do they wish they had been less devoted, or think they might have followed their Master at a greater distance, made an occasional compromise with the world, and had

a place assigned them not quite so near the throne? I believe if one of those redeemed ones would answer that question he would say, that if regrets could be in heaven, it would be a source of eternal regret had they followed their Master at a greater distance, or been less devoted to his cause; but, as it is, their faithfulness is an eternal augmentation of their happiness. Not because their doing or suffering has merited anything, but because their faith and obedience has received the promised reward.

O, my friend, fear not to trust him with all you have and are. Offer all to God, and then, if anything you love seems about to be removed, you may ask him in submission to leave it with you a while longer, and he will if he sees it proper to do so; but always try to have the spirit that meekly bows, and says, Lord, not as I will, but as thou wilt. You cannot imagine, until you experience it, the sweetness of having the will resigned. It saves from all distracting care, and brings into the soul a holy quiet. Not the indifference of stoicism, but the calm confidence of

one who knows "my Father is at the helm." One who had much experience in divine things says: "I feel the will of God to be as a soft pillow on which I can recline my weary head. Religion would lose much of its sweetness if I had to choose for myself, were I capable of doing so. Oh how unutterably sweet it is to follow the Lord with childlike simplicity!" On another occasion she says: "I see the world as nothing; it has nothing to bestow that can for a moment captivate my soul. In the ever-blessed Trinity alone is all good. I feel very grateful to him for the blessings of this life which I enjoy; for food, raiment, a comfortable home, and endearing social relationships; these very greatly augment my happiness when they are enjoyed in God, but not otherwise. 'Tis his presence that gives a charm to everything; without it my heart must mourn an aching void. But oh! how sweet are the endearments of social life when enjoyed in God. How they inspire gratitude to him who hath constituted us social beings, and in his arrangements has provided for all our wants!

And to what glorious society will the faithful be admitted when they leave the shores of time. Yea, even here, what are they not promised? 'I and my Father will come,' saith the Saviour, 'and make our abode with you.' And again, 'I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth.' Here the whole Deity is represented as holding communion with the believing soul. But in that upper world, he shall see unveiled the glory of the Lord, and commune with him face to face.

'There a day, without night,
We shall spend in his sight,
And eternity seem as a day.' "

Thus, you see, my sister, we lose none of the rational enjoyments of life by our consecration to God; on the contrary, we are the better fitted for properly enjoying the blessings which a God of love has provided for us. Many have misrepresented the religion of the blessed Jesus, by making the impression that we must renounce all the enjoyments of this life in order to possess it.

True, we must renounce whatever cannot be subservient to piety; whatever conflicts with our spiritual interests; but all the rational enjoyments of life can be made to subserve those interests; and we will find that they do, when grace reigns, and love is the main-spring of all our actions.

It is not by excluding ourselves from the world, in a cloister, that we are to glorify God; it is by "using the world, as not abusing it;* remembering that the fashion thereof passeth away." It is by laboring, in all our social relationships, to promote the interests of our Saviour's kingdom; and while we enjoy the blessings of this life, hold them as gifts which the giver has a right to withdraw when he pleases, always looking forward to a future state of existence for the consummation of our bliss. If we enjoy our blessings in God, we can never lose them as long as we cleave to him. Our friends cannot be lost to us, though they may be removed from

* That is, making a proper use of the good things of this life, which God in his providence gives us; at the same time renouncing all the vanities of the world.

our sight, either by death or some other circumstance, if they and we are in Christ; however far we may be separated in body, Christ is our centre, and in him we meet. How sweet the thought is to those who are prevented from seeing the faces of those they love! Oh how precious is this union with Jesus! In order to this, we must be careful that all the unions we form here are formed in him. "I am a companion of all them that fear the Lord," says the Psalmist, and when we choose any other, we forfeit the enjoyment that God designed for us in constituting us social beings, and place ourselves in the way of being seduced from Christ.

My dear friend, delay not to give him all; friends, health, wealth, reputation, all you have, and all you are, so shall you prove the sweetness of this heavenly union. You may safely trust him—he is worthy of your fullest confidence. Oh that you may speedily prove how worthy he is!

LETTER VIII.

Christian perfection not Adamic—Love is the fulfilling of the law—Christ makes an atonement for our imperfections—Continual faith in his blood brings us into constant contact with his merits, and renders our imperfect service acceptable—Christian perfection described—Some of its glorious results referred to, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

It is with great pleasure I behold your increased earnestness in the interesting subject on which we have been communicating, and your increasing light. Bless God for every ray of light you receive, and for every desire after conformity to his will which you experience, and take encouragement from this, to believe that he designs your complete restoration to his image. But I would warn you against confounding Adamic, or Angelic, and Christian perfection. If you do this, you will raise the standard so high as to place

it beyond your reach. Forget not that the law of love is the Christian's law, and that he who loves God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself, is the perfect man; for "love is the fulfilling of the law."—Rom. xiii.

10. Now, we are not free from mistakes, even when love to God is the mainspring of all our actions; and errors in judgment may lead us into errors in practice, which would have brought Adam into condemnation with his perfect judgment, and clear discernment of right and wrong. "Sin is a transgression of the law of God," and while our passions and affections are under the influence of love, we will shun the least thing that we know God has forbidden; consequently, we will not sin. But we may ignorantly transgress a known law without condemnation, as in the case of Paul with the High Priest (as recorded in the 23d chapter of Acts), when he commanded the people to smite him on the mouth, when he was making his defence against the wicked accusations of the Jews. Paul said: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the

law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" But on his being reminded of the law that commands reverence for the High Priest, he immediately apologized, saying: "I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest." Paul declared the judgment of God against this iniquitous judge, who, instead of protecting the prisoner and giving him a fair hearing, delivered him to the insults of the mob, and even commanded them to practise insult upon him; but respect for the office of the priesthood would have prevented him from giving such a public reproof; at least, such an unceremonious one. Paul knew the law, but his absence from Jerusalem, and the frequent political changes there, hindered him from knowing the High Priest; so he incurred no guilt in the sight of him who made the law. For such errors as this the atonement avails.

We may not expect to feel that ardor in our love to God at all times, which we feel at some times; or to feel that energy in his service. Various natural causes, over which we have no control, will operate so as to

produce dulness at times. When this is the case, and we feel we can appeal to him who knows our hearts, that our aim is to serve him faithfully, we need not fear; and though a view of the imperfection of our best services cause us to feel deep humiliation before God, we may comfort ourselves with the thought that our Saviour's sacrifice renders even these acceptable, when they are, by faith, connected with it; and that if faithful, we shall, one day, serve and praise him with nobler powers. As for those other infirmities of our nature, such as errors in judgment, failures in memory, or anything else that is not a breach of the law of love, the Saviour's all-availing sacrifice makes for them a perfect satisfaction. Just think of the apostle's argument, as the High Priest once a year went into the Holy of Holies, with the blood of the sacrifice, to make an atonement, and to intercede for the people, so Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, continually presents the sacrifice of himself, once offered for us; and is ever making intercession for us. Now, a continual casting ourselves on this atone-

ment causes it to be momentarily efficacious in rendering us acceptable; so that while we are constrained to say—

“Every moment, Lord, *I need*
The merit of thy death;”

we may be able, sweetly, to add—

“Every moment, Lord, *I feel*
The merit of thy death.”

Oh this is merit enough! we need no more. What, if we are all unworthiness—Christ is worthy, and he is ours! Mr. Fletcher says: “Christian perfection is a glorious constellation, composed of those beautiful stars, perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect long-suffering, perfect charity for our visible enemies, and for our invisible God, of which perfect love is the leading star, and so comprises all the rest, that it is often used to express the whole.”—See Fletcher’s *Polemical Essay on Christian Perfection*. Perfect humility is a deep and abiding sense of our utter unworthiness and nothingness before God; that we deserve not the least crumb of mercy at his hand; that

our proper place is low at the Saviour's feet, in speechless adoration, since he deigns to look upon us in mercy. Yes, it constrains us to get very low and say: "Lord, let me kiss thy bleeding feet and bathe and wash them with my tears!" Self-dependence is all gone then, and the individual feels that without some other dependence he must surely fail. But his perfect faith has hold of one who is mighty, and he is his strength. It takes hold of the promise, and rests in it; clings to the cross, and exultingly says:—

"The cross on which he bowed his head,
Shall lift me to the skies."

If clouds and darkness arise, it enables its possessor to say: Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Though the blessings of thy Providence, which we daily enjoy, should be withheld, and famine stare me in the face, "yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation;" and if deep afflictions visit me, so that he seem to slay me, yet will I trust in

him. Perfect meekness enables us to behave with gentleness towards all men. It strikes at the root of a domineering spirit, and manifests itself in a condescending, courteous behavior, even when it becomes necessary to attack false doctrines; as Paul advised Timothy in "meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves; if, peradventure, God will give them repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth." It is that spirit which is ever ready to forgive injuries; and to become all things to all men, so that we may glorify God, and save souls. But it will yield to no weak, sinful compliance with the worldly-minded, for the sake of gaining them; neither will it give up any truth of God in compliment to men's prejudices or their vanity. No, no! It is a fruit of the Spirit, and ever stands firmly on the rock of ages, and takes the word of God alone for its compass and chart; and is ever ready to wield the Lord's weapons in the defence of his truth. I am set, said Paul, for the defence of the gospel; but all his weapons were spiritual; it is always so with Christian meekness.

And perfect long-suffering is kind, Paul tells us, even after it has suffered long. Not only does it refrain from revenge, but it is ready to perform acts of kindness for the offender. But what shall I say of charity? This is the queen of graces; or, rather, the sum of all the graces, as we have shown us in the 13th chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians. "This is the image of God, for 'God is love,' and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."—1st John iv. 16. "This is the grace that lives and sings," when most of the other graces shall have no exercise, for "the heaven of heavens is love." But why should such an unworthy pen as mine attempt to describe it! An angel's mind could not fathom its depths profound, nor scan its mighty heights, as it exists in its infinite source, from which the Christian's perfect love is derived. It is an ocean without bottom or shore, into which you, my sister, may plunge and lose yourself; self-will, and pride, and love of the world, and whatever else is opposed to its nature will be drowned, and Jesus Christ will become all in

all. Oh what a prospect does this open to us! Communion with God here, and the eternal fruition of his love hereafter—the peace of God which passeth understanding, keeping our hearts—the Holy Ghost for an indwelling, abiding comforter—the Lord God for a sun and shield—giving us every good thing—causing us to “abide under the shadow of the Almighty”—“Giving his angels charge over us, to keep us in all our ways”—“Teaching us to do his will; leading us into the land of uprightness”—“Guiding us continually”—“Satisfying our souls in drought; causing us to be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, the water of which fails not”—“Making our walls salvation, and our gates praise”—enabling us to “mount up on wings as eagles;” to soar above these low grounds, where clouds and mists obscure the vision; and in the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and by an eye of faith, to take a survey from Pisgah’s top, of the land on the other side of Jordan. May we not well say: “Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield

of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!" "Cry out, and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One in the midst of thee!" That you, my sister, may speedily be brought into the *fulness* of his salvation, is the prayer of

Your friend.

LETTER IX.

Satan's wiles further considered—Our weakness no cause of discouragement, since Christ is our strength—It is a false humility that would keep us from Christ—Exhortations to press on to the enjoyment of our privilege, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I see you prove daily that you must fight if you will wear either the crown of perfect love here, or the crown of glory in the world above. But be not dismayed; the Captain of your salvation always leads

his followers on to certain victory. You say you do not distrust him, but you cannot trust yourself. You believe him faithful, but fear such is your weakness that you will fall behind the ranks, and one day be overtaken by some enemy and slain; or that, at least, if you should profess yourself willing to follow him into the hottest of the battle, in the hour of trial your courage would fail, and your cowardice bring disgrace on his cause, and cause his enemies to triumph. This is a very subtle temptation, and carries with it the more force, because you feel, as you ought to, no confidence in the flesh. You see and feel something of your own weakness. But let me tell you, you will have clearer views, and deeper convictions of your own nothingness when you come to feel you "can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth you," than you will ever have before. When the Christian loses himself in Christ's fulness, he sinks into depths unspeakable of his own helplessness and unworthiness, and of self-abandonment. But here he is not discouraged; for though he is all weakness,

Christ is Almighty power. He can afford to be without any self-sufficiency, for the daily language of his heart is—

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in thee I find.”

The promise is, the Lord God will be your reward. Fear not, he will supply all needed strength—your weakness will recommend you to the especial care of him who “carries the lambs in his bosom.” Cleave to him now, and give yourself no trouble about what you will do in the hour of trial: he will take care of that. You may rest assured he will never send you a warfare at your own charge; and by cleaving to him you will become strong in his strength, fit for active service. “The battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift;” but those who feel that they have neither strength to fight, nor wisdom to avoid the enemy, and follow Christ as their leader, relying on his wisdom and strength, always come off victorious. Now this fear of forsaking Christ, or of not maintaining our ground, should we get upon high

ground, is unbelief; though we are ready to think it is not want of confidence in God, but in ourselves. If we believe that God will enable us to come out boldly on the side of true religion, and take a firm stand against the allurements of the world, may we not, with equal propriety, believe he will enable us to maintain our ground, and to walk worthy of our high vocation? Surely we may; and, if we do so, we will have none of those fears of dishonoring our profession. We must take care of letting our humiliating views of ourselves keep us away from Christ. That is a spurious humility, growing out of unbelief, that would do so; but the true, which is a fruit of faith, and is the effect of proper views of ourselves, instead of hindering us from coming to Christ for all he has promised, union with the ever-blessed Trinity here, and an admittance into eternal glory hereafter, almost drives us to him. It would run to the bleeding wounds of Jesus to escape from our sin and pollution. It is so ashamed of our defiled garments, it hastens to have them made white in the blood

of the Lamb. When I hear people say, when they are pressed to seek after their privilege in the gospel, Oh, I am too unworthy, I would not dare to expect such high things; I shall be content if I barely get inside of heaven's gates at last, I always think, what a pity that you do not properly see and feel your unworthiness; for, if you did, you would not dare to stay at such a distance from Christ. You would fear that the Lord would swear in his wrath that one so unworthy would no longer be favored with the common blessings of life, or the privileges of the gospel; that such a fruitless tree would no longer be suffered to cumber the ground; and you would instantly seek to be ingrafted into Christ, the living vine, that you might bring forth fruit to the glory of God; and to be fully purged that you might bring forth more fruit. Surely if people had proper views of their unworthiness, they would not expect to hear the welcome plaudit of "Well done, good and faithful servant," after following Christ at so great a distance, and serving him in such a cold, half-hearted manner. If his most faithful

servants feel, as they surely do, that they are unprofitable servants, it appears to me, that those who never would deny themselves, and take up the cross and follow him, must blush at being admitted into his presence, and that such an interview would not be desirable. O, my friend, you have a cunning adversary to deal with; be careful then to search out his lurking places, and pray earnestly and constantly that you may understand his wiles. And, oh, beware of voluntary humility! It has cheated many out of their birthright. Be not dismayed, go up and possess the good land; for, in the strength of your Lord, you are well able. "He giveth power to the faint"—and to them who ask wisdom of him he giveth liberally. Be ambitious of rising high:—

"Emulate the angelic choir
Who only live to love and praise."

Oh that Almighty God may now kindle a pure flame on the mean altar of your heart, and that it may burn for his glory with inextinguishable blaze! That the fire of his

love may come down speedily and consume whatever of dross remains, and make you a temple fitted for the Holy Ghost! As to your being too young to seek after such high things, or at least to expect them now, while many in the church, and useful persons too, who are much older, make no such profession, it would be presumption in you to expect it now; don't listen to that for a moment. Your adversary has often played that card, and sometimes successfully; but not always so, to the great advantage of those who have overcome him. I have in my mind now a young person whom he persuaded to listen to that, and other subtleties, and give up the pursuit; and where is he now? Immersed in the world—and the last time I heard him, he mourned the loss of the joys once felt; but of which there remained but the painful remembrance. If you are not too young to enlist in Emmanuel's service, and to have your name enrolled with his militant hosts, you are not too young to have every traitor cast out of your bosom. Inbred sin is hostile to the cause you have espoused; if you

are a good soldier you will not remain in league with it; and surely there is no necessity for having it there annoying you by its incitements to rebellion. There are very great advantages to be derived from early consecration to God. While the heart is tender it is easier having it moulded into the Divine Image; when its tendrils have become entwined around the world, it is not so easy to untwine them; it often happens that some of them have to be broken. Many have lived to mourn their not working with the Divine Spirit when he early called them to entire consecration; none ever regretted their early devotion to God. You would not have the young morning of your days devoted to sin; you are thankful that the Lord early called you to seek his face, and adopted you into his family. Why should you not wish to enjoy all the blessings and privileges of your heirship? Why should you be content with occasional interviews with your Father, when it is your privilege to commune with him daily and hourly; to hear his voice speaking to you in accents of unutterable

sweetness, and to enjoy the smiles of his countenance? You will deprive yourself of this if you do not conform heartily to the laws of his household. O, spurn the enemy when he comes to you with such suggestions; don't listen to him for a moment; pray and wrestle on until you gain the complete victory; and remember this is the victory that overcometh Satan, as well as the world, even our faith. I will further consider the reasons why you should do so in my next letter.

LETTER X.

Reasons for early consecration further considered—

There may be much usefulness where great talents are not given—Those who have been most useful were early consecrated to God—The necessity of being entirely consecrated to God, that we may be kept in his fear—There is no presumption in claiming our privilege—If others live beneath their privilege that is no reason why we should, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

According to my purpose, I proceed to consider, further, the reasons for early entire consecration. In addition to those already mentioned, there is the advantage of a life of usefulness. You can never be as useful as you ought to be, unless you are propelled, at all times, by the love of God, and your neighbor: this will not be the case until all your powers are consecrated to God, and his love takes entire possession of your bosom.

You may oftentimes feel thus divinely propelled; but, in proportion as any opposition to the will of God remains, your usefulness will be lessened: the remains of pride, self-will, and love of the world will, at times, drag you down to earth; and if they do not cause you to retrograde (which they will be very likely to do), they will make you often move sluggishly. It is when the language of our heart is—

“Take my soul and body’s powers;
Take my memory, mind, and will:
All my goods, and all my hours;
All I know, and all I feel,”

that we are ready to say, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” “Here I am, send me.” ’Tis then our feet delight to run, with swiftness, in the way of his commandments. Nor do seeming difficulties deter us; for we can say, “Though an host should encamp around me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident; for the Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be

afraid?" Are you afraid that your life will be too long, to be entirely devoted to God? I hope not. I think you are ready to say, as you stand at the foot of the cross, and reflect on salvation's wondrous plan,

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

Then add, here Lord, I am determined that, from this moment, thou shalt have all—

"No more shall earth my heart divide;
With Christ will I be crucified."

Oh that this may, evermore, be the breathing of your soul! If you are thus consecrated to the service of God, you will find that he has inseparably connected happiness, both here and hereafter, with usefulness. "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."—Dan. xii. 3. Why did Wesley, Fletcher, Hester Ann Rogers, Mrs. Fletcher, Lady Maxwell, and a host of other bright stars, that have from time to time shone in the spiritual hemisphere, enjoy so much? Because they

were "instant in season, out of season;" serving God, according to their several abilities, in their various spheres of action; and they had the testimony of his spirit that they pleased him; and it was of very little consequence to them whether the world smiled, or frowned on them; it did not interfere with their enjoyment. And here I would correct an error into which we are apt to run; that is, because we have not their talents we can neither be so happy, nor so useful. This is a great mistake. If we are improving the opportunities with which we are favored, and spending our time and talents in the service of God, and to his glory, in the sphere of life, in which his providence has placed us, we are as acceptably serving him as Gabriel the archangel, and will as certainly find the reward. None, that I have ever heard or read of, enjoyed more of God here, than one who lived in humble life, for she lived in the capacity of a servant. But she glorified God in that humble sphere; glorified him also in the fire of affliction; and he exalted her here to communion with himself,

and after she had suffered awhile, to a seat at his right hand. The venerable Wesley was acquainted with her, though she trod the vale of humble life; and he says, he wept when he thought of her loss to the church, and calls her "that lovely saint, now with God, Jane Cooper." Thus you see, that though great talents may, and ought to be turned to great account, eminent holiness prepares for eminent usefulness in whatever sphere we move; and though that usefulness may be of such a nature as to attract little attention, it will no less secure the approbation of him who will reward every man according to his work. Christians are built up "a spiritual house;" and, though all cannot be corner-stones, each one is important in his own place; his removal would cause a breach that must be filled up, or the symmetry and beauty of the building would be spoiled: those who think themselves of no account in God's house should remember this.

Again, I would observe, this will give you stability of character. Oh, how many Chris-

tians have to lament their proneness to vacillation! They are so easily led away, at least in heart: they deplore their heart-wanderings, their littleness of love. Entire consecration strikes at the root of these evils, and there is no other way of having them cured: any other mode of cure is but slightly healing over the wound, while the disease rankles beneath. But when Christ takes entire possession of the heart, erects his throne, and casts out his enemies, then the believer can sing with the Psalmist, "O God, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise." There is, then, no hankering after forbidden objects; but his language is, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." He can sing—

"Now, rest my long divided heart;
Fix'd on this blissful centre, rest;
Nor ever from thy Lord depart;
With him of every good possess'd!"

Oh what a precious resting place! My sis-

ter, would you not like to have this hiding place till all the storms of life be passed? I know you would. Then don't mind your youth; believe, believe this hour, this moment, and enter in! But you fear you could not withstand the allurements that beset the path of youth; and it would be better not to take so high a stand, than after you had taken it to backslide. You have taken a noble stand, as a soldier of the cross, how do you think you will maintain it if you have not all traitors within destroyed, who are ever ready to join with those without that would seduce you? Are you not afraid that the whirlpool of worldly-mindedness will engulf you, except you have given the care of your little barque fully up to Christ, the skilful Pilot? If you think it requires the gravity of more mature years to keep you in the way of holiness, how do you think you can, without holiness, tread the slippery paths of youth, and maintain your present relation to God? As I have said before, this will give you firmness to stand, for the Rock of Ages will be your strength. And as

for the suggestion, that it would be presumption in you to take so high a stand, where is the presumption in acknowledging that you are a debtor to the grace of God; that you are not your own, but bought with a price, and you come to surrender to him what he has a just claim upon? Is there not more presumption in acting upon the supposition that you are too young to admit all his claims, and expecting to share the reward of his faithful servants? Where is the presumption in saying, Lord, I am defiled; but thou dost invite me to the fountain of thy blood, where I may wash my garments and have them made white; I come at thy invitation. Is there not more presumption in asking him to favor you with his presence, while you remain at least partially defiled, and refuse to wash in the fountain he has opened in his own precious veins? Oh be careful that you have right views of presumption! If others go halting, that is no reason why you should. If they deprive themselves of the sweets of holy, intimate communion with the ever-blessed Trinity,

that is no reason why you should not enjoy it. If they must—

———“Grovel here below,
Fond of these earthly toys,”

that is no reason why you should not leave them behind, soar above the world, and rise high in communion with God. Nay, it is a reason why you should honor your Lord by showing that you consider him worthy, not only of your declining years, when the world loses its charms, but of the bloom of youth, the vigor of womanhood; that he is “the glory of your brightest days,” and that the world has nothing to give that will compare with his love. If there are but few who desire to be stars of the first magnitude, do you cultivate such a holy ambition; if any call it presumption, care not for it. “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to believers, in faith, in hope, in charity.” Oh this is a glorious presumption, if it be one! God honors it; and on a dying bed, and through eternity, you will rejoice that you presumed to claim what the free, un-

merited love of God made your privilege. Strange that any one should think it presumption for a poor, ragged beggar to submit to be clothed from the King's wardrobe, before she appears in his presence, when he has given orders to that effect! Oh haste to enter, more fully, into the wounds of the Crucified, and you will prove them each day more healing, and be fully prepared to "glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his."

LETTER XI.

Encouragements to persevere in the way of faith—Examples of persons early consecrated to God—Devotion to Christ ranks us with the ancient and modern worthies, at the head of which phalanx Christ stands—Exhortations to an immediate act of faith—Joy in heaven over the soul contending for its privilege—The thought that those of our friends who have gone before participate in it, a strong stimulus to perseverance—The happy consequences of believing, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I bless God, on your behalf, that you are determined not to let the world, or the great adversary of your soul, cheat you out of the blessings consequent on entire consecration to God. You say that you are determined not to rest until you feel that Christ Jesus is your Saviour to the uttermost; until he casts down every high thing that would exalt itself against him, and sways his mild sceptre over all your passions and emotions. This

gives me great pleasure, and I pray that you may speedily prove the sweetness of sitting at his feet clothed in the robe of holiness, the garment of his salvation. And surely you will if you keep to your resolution, and continue looking to Jesus, *using all the means, and expecting the end in every one.* Your blessed Saviour will soon say to you, "I will, be thou clean," and all the leprosy will quickly depart. He will cause his Spirit to descend upon you as a spirit of burning, and it will purge and purify you; it will take away all the dross and tin of sin, and cause you to reflect his blessed Image. Oh, what a precious truth; how full of consolation! Then wait for him, and "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Open to him the door of your heart, and he will come in and sup with you; and the feast will be everlasting love. You shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more for drops of finite happiness; for he will break to your soul the bread of life, and the water of life shall be in you a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. You shall not be afraid in the evil time, nor

in the day of trouble ; for the Lord will be thy keeper, and thy shade upon thy right hand. "The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul." And then think of the worthies with whom you rank. Enoch walked with God. Abraham's faith made him the "friend of God." Isaiah's lips were touched with a live coal from off the altar of God, and he was purified. Samuel was consecrated to God in his infancy. Moses early refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Jeremiah was sanctified to God from his birth. Elijah would not bow the knee to Baal, when he knew not that there was another in the land who refused; but thought they were all cut off by the wicked idolaters; and he knew they sought his life also. Daniel would worship and serve his God, should he be cast into the lions' den for it. Paul counted all things loss, so that he might win Christ. Yea, he

was willing not only to be bound at Jerusalem, but to die for the Lord Jesus. John refused not to be banished to Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Numbers of the early Christians suffered themselves to be torn by wild beasts at Rome; and in later times, many have submitted to the ferocity of fiercer men for Christ's sake; thus proving that they counted all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. Now, although you may never be called to seal your testimony with your blood, as they were, or to suffer the loss of all things for his sake, when you make an entire dedication of yourself to God you enter these lists; and while you maintain this spirit of sacrifice you stand in these ranks; at the head of which stands the blessed Jesus, who said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me;" and in that body he suffered the penalty due to the broken law, satisfied the demands of divine justice, and thus glorified God, and carried out his designs in saving

the world ; and now he stands at the head of the glorious phalanx of cross-bearers as their leader ; the Captain of their salvation, who was made perfect through suffering.

“ Our glorious leader claims our praise
For his own pattern given,
While the long cloud of witnesses
Show the same path to heaven.”

And with this glorious leader, and stimulated by the example of those who have gone before, and by the company of those who are now pressing their way onward, may we not sing, as we travel on—

“ Patient, the appointed race to run,
This weary world we cast behind ;
From strength to strength we travel on,
The New Jerusalem to find :
Our labor this, our only aim,
To find the New Jerusalem.”

If, at any time, you feel disposed to grow weary, or faint in your mind, think of those who have overcome, and now wave their palms before the throne. But, above all, listen to your Lord saying to you, in the

most cheering manner possible, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit on my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." If you are tempted, hear him say, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I will keep thee from the hour of temptation." "Hold fast what thou hast, let no man take thy crown." And "him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." O, my friend, the crown of perfect love is now reached out to you; seize it, and hold it fast. Let the hand of faith be instantly reached out to take hold of it; if it be withered, you will find that the determination to make a present effort will give it strength; and, with every increased effort you will receive additional strength, until you are enabled to hold it firmly, and to sing—

"Now I have found the ground wherein,
Sure, my soul's anchor may remain;
The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
Before the world's foundation slain.
Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
When heaven and earth are fled away."

I think if one of those redeemed ones who have escaped from earth, having gained the final victory, could look over the heights of Zion, and see you engaged in this glorious struggle, it would cause a deeper thrill of heavenly joy to animate his bosom; and, were he to speak, he would say, Fight on; the warfare is a glorious one, the victory will be certain, and the reward a crown and a kingdom that shall eternally endure. Who knows, but some one whose prayers have long since been lodged in the court of heaven for you, sees you contending for your privilege, and strike a higher note of praise to God, that the subject of once anxious solicitude is contending for her place in the skies: no longer content with grovelling here below, she prunes her wings, and rises to her celestial sphere; asserts her dignity, claims her immortality, and refuses to be satisfied with anything less than those immortal joys that bloom in perpetual freshness before the throne of God: scorning to trifle away her precious time, and seeking a preparation for usefulness in some part of the Lord's vine-

yard, which gives employment to every variety of talent, so that in "doing and bearing the will of her Lord," she may still be preparing to meet her reward. Oh, how the thought should stimulate us to perseverance! If the racers in the Grecian games were stimulated by the thought that they were watched by anxious friends, who waited to see them crowned victors, should not this stimulate the Christian, who runs for a heavenly prize? and, if he runs on, will surely receive a crown of immortal glory.

O, what a glorious hope is ours! Enemies may beset our path, and seek to impede our progress by throwing obstacles in our way, but they can never succeed while we keep "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." "Legions of dire, malicious foes" may marshal themselves against us; but, with our Leader at our head, we shall pass through their ranks unhurt. Yes! we shall march in triumph, singing, "Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory." Bless his name!

“His blood can make the foulest clean,” and to that precious fountain you are this moment invited. Oh, then, by an act of faith, “sink into the purple flood!” and you shall rise into the life of God.

LETTER XII.

Exhortations to an entire trust in Christ and to present faith in his blood—Christ’s readiness to give us full salvation—Danger in expecting him to work according to our preconceived notions—Fletcher’s opinion on that subject—The simplicity of love, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I think I see you at the mouth of the pool, just ready to step in, and yet fearful of venturing. Oh, how long you have waited there, because when you were going to plunge into the purple flood, time after time, you allowed yourself to be discouraged by whatever suggestions Satan and unbelief

presented, and you started back afraid! Venture now—hear the blessed Jesus, your Saviour, say, Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and besides me there is no Saviour; and look now, believe now, and enter into rest. I see it is come to that with you, that there remains nothing, but to venture on Christ, and accept him as your Saviour, from this moment, henceforth. I know you have faith in the cleansing efficacy of his blood, and in the truth of his promises, and in his love and condescension; but you fear to bring it down to the present moment lest you should do wrong. Well now, reflect a little; here you come to Christ believing him to be a Saviour from all sin; feeling your need of him, willing to be saved in his own way; willing to give yourself wholly up to him, to follow in whatever path he shall choose to lead; and believing that what you want he is willing and ready to bestow. Now, can you not look up to him, and say, Lord, thou hast made me willing, for which I praise thee, and thou canst never be more

willing, or more ready than thou art now; and there never can be a more acceptable time, for I cannot make myself a whit more worthy, therefore, I venture upon thee *now*—I claim thee my Saviour, from this moment, to all eternity, and as such I fully rest on thee. “Praise God from whom all blessings flow!” O, my sister, if you will do this, you shall enter into rest—the rest of faith; the Canaan of his love. Don’t think anything at all about the weakness of your faith. It may be but as a grain of mustard seed, but if it takes hold of the atonement, and the promise, it will accomplish great results; it is by exercise that it becomes strong. Be careful of looking for his coming in a way that is out of his general order. “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,” are the Saviour’s words. It is seldom the Lord, when he comes to speak in love, makes his appearance in the earthquake, the fire, or the whirlwind; he is more generally heard in “the still, small voice,” speaking to the inmost soul, and producing an unutterable calm, with a sweet sinking into

the will of God. All the clamors of passion and self-will are hushed, and the soul experiences a holy quiet, an indescribable rest. Mr. Fletcher says, in his address to persons seeking this grace, "Be not as Naaman, who said, behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. The Lord usually goes a much plainer way to work. Turn not away in a rage from a plain Jesus when he says, Go wash in the Jordan of my blood, and be clean." The human heart is fond of pomp and display, but holiness, or perfect love, strikes at the root of this feeling; so that we cannot get into this blessed state until we come down to the simplicity of little children, looking up, trustfully, to a tender parent. Love is simple, and it shuns all ostentation. The law was given with the thunderings of Sinai, but the Gospel came without pomp, or parade; and was only seen in its glorious results. Now, I do not mean if he should confound, overpower you with his love, that

you are to turn away from him, and say his spirit must operate differently; but, I do mean, that you are to listen to his inmost whisper, and not demand of him to speak in thunder tones, when he says, "I will, be thou clean." Let your faith this moment take hold of his word and turn from everything else; think nothing about what the peculiar manner was in which he manifested himself to other hearts, so that you may expect him to reveal himself just in the same way to you; leave to himself the manner of his Spirit's working, but in your inmost soul say, Speak, Lord, and speak *now*, I wait to hear thy voice. Thou art all love, and thou canst not but delight in my happiness; and renewal after thine image is essential to my happiness, and to effect this thou hast become my Prophet, Priest, and King; as such my faith embraces thee, and I give myself up to be saved by thee from this very hour, this very moment! The sacrifice must be accepted by thee, poor as it is, for it is just what thou dost ask of me, and I have nothing better to give. I fly from self and sin, and

take refuge in thy wounds, and rest in thee my present, and my perfect Saviour! I now believe thy word, and claim thee mine! If you do this, I have no doubt when next I hear from you, you will have found the

“Rest of faith,
The Sabbath of his love.”

I see you just ready to enter this rest; another effort of faith, and your soul will securely anchor in the wounds of the Crucified. May you make it this hour, this moment!

LETTER XIII.

The blessedness of the enjoyment of perfect love—The importance of walking in the highway of holiness—The perfect Christian derives momentarily his life from Christ—The Christian armor given us to use it—Persecution to be expected—Christ hath set us an example of patient endurance—Necessity of cultivating the graces of the Spirit—Christian perfection admits of growth—Christ will lead his people on, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

Your last gave me unspeakable pleasure. I rejoiced exceedingly on learning that you were enabled by faith to lay hold on the hope set before you, and that you have been brought to experience the sweetness of fully losing yourself in Christ; so that while you feel you are nothing, Christ is all in all. O, what a sweet experience! How it makes the world sink into nothing in our estimation! How precious is Jesus and his salvation now! How fully is he justified in all his dealings

with you! The glorious Sun of righteousness has shed his refulgent beams across the gloom, so that you can now say, The darkness is past, and the true light now shines. Self is crucified, accursed unbelief is slain, high imaginations are brought down, and you are sitting at the foot of the cross; while you love to sing—

“ Here I'll set forever viewing
Mercy's streams in streams of blood,
Precious drops ! my soul bedewing,
Pleads, and claims my peace with God.”

Your unworthiness does not now discourage you, for you see it all roll down at the foot of the cross, and Jesus Christ is become your present and eternal worthiness. Death has lost its sting, the grave its remaining terrors, and a glorious immortality opens to your view. You now know that neither your youth, nor the shortness of the time you have been a professor in the church, nor your great unworthiness, hindered Christ from bestowing upon you his full salvation when you came humbly, and believingly

pleading his promises. Oh, what a covenant-keeping God is ours! Who would not trust him? Blessed Jesus, we would believe thy every word, thy every promise true; save us from unbelief! My sister, look now at the road on which you are; it is the highway of holiness, cast up for the ransomed of the Lord. "No lion shall come thereon, nor any ravenous beast; the unclean shall not pass over it; but the redeemed shall walk there." And as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so you are to walk in him. You received him by coming out from the world, dedicating yourself to him, acknowledging your unworthiness, pleading his promises, believing his word, and casting yourself on his atonement; just so you are to walk in him. For want of remembering this, many lose the blessing almost immediately. They think that because they have made the effort, that has put them in possession of their heart's desire, they have got no more to do; they may settle down and take their ease. In a short time they are overtaken by an enemy, and taken captive or slain. They

had laid aside their armor, foolishly thinking they would have no more use for it, and so were unprepared to defend themselves; they ceased to watch, and were surprised by the enemy. But you will be taught of the Lord better than this, if you take his word and his Spirit for your guide. If you take anything instead of these, you get into fanaticism, and it is hard to say where you may stop. Remember, his Spirit's teachings are always in accordance with his word, and it is a false spirit that teaches anything contrary thereto. But the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth, for "he shall take of the things that are Christ's, and shall show them unto you;" and as he sometimes employs the weakest in instructing his children, that the glory may all redound to himself, suffer a word of exhortation from your friend; and if it be seasonable, give the glory all to God. Never forget that since you are got on the highway of holiness you are to walk in it; and not to stop until it leads you to the end, which is everlasting life. You remember what diligent use of the means of grace, what earnest

searching of the Scriptures, what prayer, what close self-examination, what readiness to do anything that you believed God required, and what faith brought you into this state of heavenly union with the blessed Jesus: all this will be necessary to your walking in him. The sacrifice which you brought once and laid upon the altar must be kept there. As you offered yourself, body, soul and spirit to him a living sacrifice; time, talents, all you were, and all you possessed, so you must do daily if you will walk in him. The language of your experience must be, "Every work I do below, I do it to the Lord;" and as the great sacrifice, made by Christ, rendered at first your offering acceptable, so it must continually be the ground of your acceptance.

Where is the room for the objection of those who say, holiness here leaves no necessity for a Saviour; we can do without him if we are holy? Take away Christ, and what sacrifice shall render ours acceptable? Take away Christ, and what shall we do for a High Priest? We shall have no

means of access to the Father; none to present our cause. We have eternal life; but, it is in him; dissolve our union with him, and what becomes of our life? We are cast forth as withered branches. But, says one, it is eternal; it cannot cease to exist. True, it exists in the vine; but if the branches are separated from the vine, they have no life; bring forth no fruit, and are only fit for the burning. Saith the apostle John, "God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1st Jn. v. 11, 12. My sister, you know that you never before felt as deeply as you do now your need of Christ, and your entire dependence upon him. Blessed Jesus, we cannot do without thee, for thou art our *all*! "Without thee we can do nothing." Holiness, instead of doing away with the necessity for a Saviour, brings us into the closest union with him; it makes that union indispensable. Sin separates us from him, but holiness hides us in the "cleft of his side." You have got on the whole

armor of God; remember you are clad in "panoply divine," that you may "fight the good fight of faith." God does not provide us with armor for which we have no use; and it would be a great mistake were you to suppose that you are now to sit down and enjoy. You must fight if you will reign; don't be afraid of using your armor: keep it bright, ready for constant use. In times of imminent danger, soldiers sleep with their armor buckled on, that when the sentinel gives the alarm of an approaching foe, they may be ready for the battle. If you are enjoying rest now, and know of no enemy near, it will not do for you to leave off your armor; if you do so, you will, undoubtedly, be surprised by some enemy; for you are surrounded by a host of dire, malicious foes, who wait an opportunity of taking advantage. You need not fear, however, only be ready for fight, or defence. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Expect difficulties; remember him that said, "It is enough for the servant to be as his

Master;" if he was persecuted, so will you, more or less. If you are faithful in setting your face against sin of every kind, especially the fashionable sins of professors, you will bring on yourself persecution, let your deportment be ever so consistent, or your spirit ever so meek. But don't mind that, think of the contradiction of sinners which Jesus bore when "he was led as a lamb to the slaughter;" and when his cruel persecutors heaped upon him their indignities, "he opened not his mouth." And think of who it was that submitted to all this. The Lord of life, and glory. "The Creator of the ends of the earth." "Him who laid the foundations of the earth, and covered it with the deep as with a garment; who coveredst himself with light as with a garment; who stretchedst out the heavens like a curtain; who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind; who taketh up the isles as a very little thing; in whose sight the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers, and the nations as the small dust in a balance." See him stand at the

tribunal of a worm that he could instantly crush, not to receive justice, but to be maltreated, maligned, abused; insult upon insult inflicted upon him, and death, itself, the most ignominious! Hear a worm of the earth, the creature of his hand, whose breath is in his nostrils, say to his Creator, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee?" Oh, impudence unparalleled! And yet to all this the blessed Jesus submitted for poor, rebellious man. Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth! Be humble, O my soul, and refuse not to bear the cross, or suffer persecution for his sake! Read, often, the thirteenth chapter of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians. There you have a beautiful description of Perfect Love; and, although I would recommend to your careful perusal the whole of the divine word, I would especially recommend to your frequent reading the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of the Gospel by John; in these you will see your high privilege set forth by our Lord himself. You would do

well, also, to consider often the doctrine and practice he taught all through his ministry, an epitome of which is to be found in the sermon on the mount.

It is very necessary that you should, now, be diligent in the cultivation of your mind and heart, "to the end you may be established." Your heart, now, resembles a garden that has been cleared of noxious weeds, and planted with right plants, and sown with good seed; but those plants need cultivation in order to their healthy growth; those seeds need watering, or they will die. Close watching is also necessary, lest the enemy destroy the tender plants, or cast evil seed into the midst of the good. As your heart is now cleansed, it need never be defiled again; but it will, if you are not careful. As one beautifully observes: "When we walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, we may wear our white robes loose and flowing; but here, it is necessary to gird them up, or they will become soiled." "Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end." Add to your faith virtue, brotherly

kindness, charity, and all the other graces of the Spirit. Whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report, if there be any virtue, or if there be any praise, think on these things.

Many persons say they cannot understand how that which is perfect can be improved; so they think Christian perfection leaves no room for growth in grace. Said a gentleman once (just after he had expressed his desire for it): "It would distress me to think it attainable now, or to attain it now; for then I could grow no more in grace." Such persons forget that perfection in nature does not imply perfection in degree. You go into your garden, and see, perhaps, a little rose tree putting forth buds and leaves, and looking so green and so healthy; you examine it carefully, and see it is in perfect health; no worms are preying upon it, and every leaf looks juicy and thriving; and after you have viewed it closely, you exclaim: "What a perfect little rose tree! It is in full vigor, not the least appearance of decay about it." You go into your garden again, in a week or two,

and you find it has grown considerably; the sap from the root has been conducted through every branch and leaf; it has put forth new shoots, and promises to grow to a very considerable size, and to supply a quantity of flowers. Who ever heard you exclaim, on beholding this: "How strange is this! I thought, when I observed the perfection of that little tree, it would grow no more; it must cease to grow, for I cannot discover a defect in it!" Is it not, rather, just as you expected? You would have no thought of expecting that another, which had some small worms lurking among its leaves, had grown as much; you would rather expect to find it drooping, some of its leaves withered, and the whole in an unhealthy state. My sister, it is no proof that the plants of grace have grown to their full size, the weeds of sin being separated from them; nor do they need those weeds to aid their growth. Pride never helped humility to grow; nor hatred, love; nor revenge, long suffering; nor haughtiness, meekness and gentleness; nor unbelief, faith. If we are become trees of righteousness, the

planting of the Lord, that is no proof that we are grown to our full size; but if we are planted in a fruitful soil, if we are planted by the rivers of water, we shall grow up into Christ, our living head, in all things; or we shall strike deeper root in love; our leaf shall not wither, and we shall bring forth fruit in the proper season. Those lovely plants, watered by the dews of his Spirit, shall grow abundantly. Nor is this figure drawn from fancy; the word of Jehovah is, "Thou shalt be like a watered garden."—Isa. lviii. 11. Holiness, or perfect love, prepares us for growing, as we cannot without it; as the removal of the weeds assists the growth of the plants. Precious Jesus, it is union with thee, the living vine, which supplies us with that which produces growth; and the closer our union, the more rapid our growth. Oh, that this union may increase daily, that we may be "rooted and grounded in love;" so shall we "grow as the corn, and flourish as the vine;" and be built up a spiritual house! This, my dear friend, will be the case if we keep looking unto Jesus. He

will preserve the trees of righteousness until they are transplanted to the paradise of God. He will superintend the building until the "top-stone is brought forth with shoutings of grace, grace unto it." He will lead on his militant hosts, from conquering to conquest, until they come to wave their palms of victory before the throne. Though enemies may seek to defile your garments, if your eye is fixed on Jesus, you shall "walk with him in white," and he will say, "Thou art worthy." That this Saviour may ever be your portion, is the prayer of your friend.

LETTER XIV.

Joy a fruit of faith—Various causes operate so as to damp it—An anecdote showing that it exists when it is not sensible—Resignation the deepest lesson the Christian learns—It is likeness to Christ—Personal experience—Faith, love, and resignation the cardinal graces—Diligence in the service of God, the way to enjoyment, &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I thank the Lord that he is leading you forward in the way of his commandments; and that you find his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. You need not chide yourself because your joy does not abound, at all times, as it does at some times; various natural causes, over which we have no control, operate so as to damp our joy, or, at least, to render it not so sensible. Joy is a fruit of faith; so is peace and love; and where any of these fruits are to be found the root is; and where the root is, all the fruit grows; though, sometimes,

there may be more of one kind than of another. Holy joy is sometimes ecstatic, and sometimes profoundly adoring in its nature; and sometimes it consists in a holy quiet in the soul, growing out of a consciousness that in humility and godly sincerity, we have our conversation in the world; and that God approves. In the latter instance, it is hardly distinguishable from peace; I believe it is that form of joy which we call peace. Sometimes the Christian has his name cast out as evil; his best motives impugned, and his whole course of conduct misjudged. This operates strongly against his joyous feelings; and the only joy he feels, now, is a secret satisfaction arising from the consciousness of his innocence, and the sweet assurance he feels that his name is written in heaven. While this remains he ought not to lament his want of joy. I knew a young Christian who was once much tried on this subject. Something occurred that tried her feelings closely, and she fled to God in prayer for grace to sustain her under the trial. The enemy attacked her with, Where is your joy

now? It is written, "Rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks;" can you now rejoice? and do you now give thanks? This for a moment confounded her, for she felt her heart sorely pained; but on looking immediately to Jesus she was enabled to reply, "Yes, bless the Lord, I can rejoice that my name is written in heaven! This cause of rejoicing I always have, and while it remains, I have joy; whether it be very sensible, or not; and I do give thanks for the grace that sustains me in the trying hour." The snare was broken; the enemy fled; and she then rejoiced with increased joy on account of the victory gained. Bless the Lord, O my soul! he gives us victory over every foe, when we look to him; and "this is the victory that overcometh the world" and Satan, "even our faith." The deepest and highest lesson we learn on earth, is resignation; and it is one we are always learning while we remain here. As we have exercise for this grace it becomes strengthened, if we are faithful. We are to learn to say—

"Give joy or grief, give ease or pain;"

not that grief or pain can ever be as desirable as joy or ease, but it is the will of our heavenly Father that is desirable. We know he cannot but choose what is best for us, and that if he afflict it must be for our good; if he suffer us to be made sorrowful, it is finally to promote our joy; therefore we desire that he should send us what he sees best. He is the great Physician; if he sees proper to administer nauseous doses or to prescribe a disagreeable regimen, we refuse not to submit, because we have entire confidence in his skill. I think there is more mysticism than Christianity in the poetic expression "Pain is sweet if thou my God art here." No doubt the idea in the mind of the poet was correct, but the expression cannot be sustained. When pain becomes sweet it ceases to be pain, and there certainly would be no resignation in bearing it; but thousands of the Lord's people have felt his love so sweet in the midst of pain, that they were filled with joy and praise. The love of Christ was sweet; but the pain, so far from being sweet, they sought by every proper means they could think of, to have it

removed; and, if they failed, still they rejoiced in the sweetness of his love, and in the prospect of deliverance from all pain.

It was this the poet had in view, and this the Christian has in view when he sings, "pain is sweet." But it would be well for us, as far as possible, to have our expressions correct, especially those we use in our songs of praise, and in our addresses to the throne of grace. For, though the idea may be correct, if the expression is wrong, we are in danger of misleading others. I have heard persons say, religion is not what its professors say; for, they say, it makes pain sweet; but, when they come to test it, they find it fails; for, they desire, as much as any others, to have pain removed; which would not be the case, if it was sweet. The mistake lies, I think, in confounding the manifestations of divine love which God makes to his suffering children with the pain, by an injudicious mode of expression. Again, many of God's most faithful children have found pain to be very severe indeed—so severe as to unfit them for anything but clinging to

Christ. When they had intervals of ease they could speak of his love, and faithfulness; but, generally, all the bodily powers were so under the influence of suffering that they could not bear the testimony to a Saviour's love that they would love to bear. These felt their Lord was with them; sustaining and comforting them, though pain was not sweet. I have dwelt upon this subject because I know truly sincere persons, whose judgment is weak, and whose love does not yet abound in all knowledge, allow themselves to be much perplexed, and cast down, when they cannot adopt the language that they sometimes find used by Christians as expressive of their religious experience; when perhaps the experience, as expressed by some of the language used, is not supported by either reason or Scripture. We must, also, leave with God to give or withhold spiritual joy, and only desire himself. To know that he is ours, and we are his; and to have the testimony that we please him, should be our chief concern. We may, very properly, ask him for anything that he

has promised, but we are not to set him a time for bestowing it, we must leave that to him to choose; and we must wait, in faith, until his promise is fulfilled, knowing that it will be in the proper time. If you still feel that you are on the altar of sacrifice, desiring only to know, and do, the will of your heavenly Father, you have much of the spirit of the blessed Jesus, who said: I am come to do the will of my Father who is in heaven, and to finish his work; this is what you are to be more earnest about than about frames or feelings. The blessed Jesus is our great exemplar; and he hungered, he thirsted, he wept, he was tempted, he was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. As man, he needed the ministry of angels; and "he was heard in that he feared." The apostles were "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing;" they were cast down, but not destroyed. This is not the place for uninterrupted enjoyment; that is reserved for heaven; but, although the surface may sometimes be ruffled, there is a holy calm felt in the depths of the soul, by the one who walks by faith. His little barque

may be tempest tossed, but his hope "is as an anchor, cast within the veil, sure and steadfast." The Lord's people sometimes have sore, internal conflict, as well as external. One writes: "The day before yesterday was one of sore conflict. I met with a very unexpected disappointment in temporal matters, and my affairs seemed brought to a very trying crisis. The news was sudden and unexpected, and with it came the enemy with a host of unbelieving suggestions, that seemed to rush upon my mind with the overwhelming force of a mountain torrent. For some minutes my distress was great; the bare idea of distrusting my Lord gave me unutterable pain; and, yet, the enemy seemed as if he would force me to distrust him. In this state I felt I could neither reflect nor reason. I could only hold, with eager grasp, the words, 'he is faithful that hath promised,' and on them rest my whole cause. I knelt in prayer, but felt I could scarcely say anything, only express my confidence in his faithfulness, and my desire to be saved from opposing his will. I then

opened my Bible, when the first words on which my eyes rested were, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' I said, I believe it, Lord, and my mind became more calm. It appears to me there is nothing the enemy is more opposed to, than waiting the Lord's time. When he cannot make me doubt his faithfulness, his grand device seems to be, to make me unwilling to wait the Lord's time. Something must be done, says he, it is not the Lord's will you should wait thus; if he were going to deliver you, he would have done it before now. Run! You can deliver yourself; you cannot stay here. Bless the Lord, I am willing and ready to act, when he seems to point out my way; but, I am not willing to run at the bidding of Satan. When my Lord assures me that I am in my proper place, and that he will cause a light to shine upon my path, I will not run out of it at Satan's command, although the clouds do lower, and thick darkness gathers around. I seemed like a vessel dashed from side to side by the violence of the waves that lashed

her on every side; but was kept by an anchor well fastened to her, and cast in a safe place: that anchor was faith in Jehovah's promises. Yesterday, however, was the Sabbath, and, oh how sweetly did my Lord commune with my heart! He gave me to enjoy rest, and peace, unutterable, in himself. I could then praise him, in the depths of my soul, that he had permitted this trial to come upon me. I felt I would not be without it. I experienced such an entire sinking into his will as is altogether indescribable. I felt a greater abstractedness from creature good than I ever felt before. To-day my soul sweetly rests in God. I now have no will but his. In one particular thing I never had as little choice before. I would, by his grace, have given up whatever I knew was opposed to his will; even if it had been pleasant, and in itself a good thing; but, now, I feel my soul has so fully centred in God that I can truly say, I have no choice. Nay, I would feel sweetness in offering what, a few days ago, would have cost nature a severe struggle. Glory to God!

‘He is the sea of love,
Where all my pleasures roll.’ ”

Here, you see, was conflict and triumph; joy increased by being made sorrowful. But some would be ready to ask, “Is this a scriptural experience?” I think it is; let us look at it for a moment. Faith never lost its hold; it held fast the promises; and what but love made the “bare idea” of distrusting painful? Then, we find, faith and love were not wanting; and an apostle says: “Thou standest by faith.”—Rom. xi. 20. Resignation was here also, saying: “Lord, let thy will be done.” These are the cardinal graces; where they exist all is safe. Our joy, for the time, may seem to have taken its departure, and our peace too, so hot is the battle; but faith gains the victory, and resignation waits patiently for the Lord to restore joy and peace, and they are restored with a fourfold increase. What a strong resemblance the temptation—“Run, you can deliver yourself”—bears to that of our blessed Lord—“Command that these stones be made bread;” and how distressing it must have been to the blessed

Jesus to have thoughts of worshipping Satan injected into his pure mind! Then, my sister, forget not that faith in God is the root from which all the other plants shoot forth; while that remains in vigorous exercise, you will neither be barren nor unfruitful. Be careful to encourage your faith by a frequent meditation on the Lord's goodness; often think on what he has brought you from, that you may be encouraged to trust him for what is to come; and if you desire enjoyment, which you may, very properly, "be fruitful in every good word and work." You serve a kind Master, and he will reward you, both here and hereafter. Be not uneasy because you cannot serve him in this way, or the other, but serve him just as he affords you an opportunity; this is all he requires. But be careful not to neglect one talent because he has not given you five or ten: improve what you have, and it will increase. If you are faithful over a few things, he will make you ruler over many things. That you may have every covenant blessing, is the prayer of your friend.

LETTER XV.

The importance of cross-bearing—The kind of self-denial we are to practise—The Word of God, and not the example of professors, is to be our guide in this matter—It is a false humility that shuns the cross—We are Jesus' witnesses—No spirit to be followed but the one that breathes in the divine word.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

The subject on which you want my views is one of great importance; I refer to that of cross-bearing. So much importance doth the blessed Jesus attach to it, that he says: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, *cannot be my disciple*."—Luke xiv. 27. The question arises here—What are we to deny ourselves? I think Mr. Wesley very clearly answers this question; and, according to his views, we are to deny ourselves: first, whatever God has forbidden; we are neither to touch, taste, nor handle anything that comes under the divine prohi-

bition; and, in the second place, we are to deny ourselves whatever leads our minds and hearts from God; whatever wholly or partially unfits us for prayer and holy intimate communion with God,* whether it is expressly forbidden or not. In many instances, only we ourselves can be the judges. There may be things, lawful in themselves, in which others may innocently indulge, that would ruin our souls should we indulge in them. Such is our constitutional temperament, that, if we go into them at all, we will go too far; or, from the weakness of our judgment, we may be led to question the lawfulness of some things that God does not condemn—as the Jew in the eating of meats; but in all cases where there is doubt, we should come “to the law and to the testimony;” and if we cannot have these doubts removed, we sin if we indulge; for “whatso-

* We do not mean by this that we are not to attend to our business, though by causing weariness, it may for a time render us less fit for these duties. Mr. Wesley says, a constant desire to do the will of God is a constant prayer.

ever is not of faith is sin.”—Rom. xiv. 23. But where we have faith in the innocency of things, we should be careful that our faith has the word of God for its foundation. How often do we hear persons say, when reproved for improper indulgence: “My conscience does not condemn me, you may think it wrong, but I don’t; therefore, I am not condemned,” when the word of God condemns them! Their consciences are seared; the Spirit of God, in consequence of having been grieved, perhaps repeatedly, has ceased to enlighten their consciences; and they, instead of testing their conduct by the only infallible standard, the word of God, take for their example the conduct of some worldly-minded professors, and thus they flatter themselves into a false peace, because conscience does not condemn them. But in many cases, the fault is not with conscience; it is in the stillness of retirement, and self-examination, that the voice of this faithful monitor is oftenest heard; like the God whose representative she is, she speaks in the depths of the soul; and such persons desire not retirement with

their consciences and their God; they dread self-examination; it is peculiarly irksome to them; therefore, they very seldom enter upon it. Conscience sometimes, however, becomes very zealous in the cause of her Sovereign, and authoritatively demands a hearing, even in the midst of gay and bustling scenes; but wearied with repeated insults, she silently retires, and leaves the individual to the judgment of his insulted Sovereign. Again, there are others who, in like manner, excuse themselves from taking up any cross. They do not feel it to be their duty, they say. God says: "As ye have opportunity, do good unto all men;" let your light so shine that others may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven, &c.; but they think the cross too heavy for them to bear; they are so tender and delicate that they would sink under it; therefore, they are privileged to walk round it, and let some one else come and take it up; and they very readily excuse themselves on the ground that they don't feel it to be their duty, and their consciences do not condemn them for the

neglect. Now they forget that refusing to obey the commands of Jehovah brings them under condemnation just as fully as doing what he has prohibited, whether their consciences be silent on the subject or not. The unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness, because he did nothing; he would not obey the command—"Occupy till I come." The people of Meroz were cursed because they did nothing. They let others come up to the help of the Lord, but they came not themselves. Oh how many such there are in the Christian church! Jehovah himself says to every one of us, "Take up thy cross and follow me;" and if we obey not his voice, we must, one day, hear it in tones of wrath, to our utter dismay.

But, my friend, I know that you have not so learned Christ. I have dwelt upon this part of the subject because I know how much the devoted, consistent Christian has to bear from the influence of the example of these; although often, indeed, they are very diligent in exhorting others to the practice of what they never do themselves, saying,

“By all means take up the cross if you feel it to be your duty ;” at the same time they dignify their own conduct with the name of humility, a deep sense of unworthiness, a disposition to retire from public view, and silently tread the paths of humble piety, &c., though we never see them afraid of being noticed by others, only when being a witness for Jesus would bring them into view. In the fashionable circle, they are not all afraid of attracting notice, and they can talk fluently if Christ and his salvation is not the theme. But their piety is of such a nature that they glide down a perfectly smooth current ; no self-denial to be engaged in ; no cross-bearing ; no coming out from the world, and standing on the Lord’s side, where it is unpopular to do so. And yet they expect to be crowned eternal conquerors, and to hear, at last, the Master say, “Well done, good and faithful servants.” Oh, what a puzzle these are to the Christian who has “not so learned Christ,” especially the young Christian. He feels, in the depths of his soul, that he is as nothing before God ; but

he knows that he is a great debtor to free, unmerited grace, and he has a conviction, founded on the word of God, that he ought to acknowledge his indebtedness, and to recommend the Saviour, whose power to save he experiences. But, how often does he say to himself, when hearing the above-mentioned persons talk, "Am I not mistaken in the source from whence this conviction comes? Does not this look like speaking of myself as though I were something, when my Lord knows I feel my proper place is low—in the dust—at his feet? Would not my silence glorify God more?" And thus he is perplexed until he refers to the Divine Word for decision, and there finds it recorded, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." He feels an almost overwhelming sense of his unworthiness; but he knows that, notwithstanding his utter want of merit, his Lord has raised him to union with himself, and he communes with him, as a man with his friend, and says to him, "Son, go work in my vineyard," pointing to him his proper place and work; and he feels, in view of his

Lord's condescension, that all his powers should be employed in his service, but is sometimes greatly afraid that he will be thought presumptive and self-important. The language of his heart is—

“Wean my soul, and keep it low—
Willing thee alone to know.”

But he hears his Master's voice calling him to act a prominent part; and, though he dare not choose for himself, he is ready to say, “Have I not mistaken the voice of another for that of my Master? Am not I too unworthy to be his chosen witness?” If he comes in contact with those alluded to, how they do increase his fears and discourage him! But, my friend, we are to remember that it is “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord,” that great results are brought about. And he makes the “weak things of this world to confound the mighty.” If at any time you are thus discouraged, listen to the voice of your Good Shepherd saying to you, “Fear not, I am with you. Be not dismayed, I am thy God.

Bear the cross, so shall you wear the crown." If it seem heavy, your blessed Lord will bear the heaviest part; for he invites you to "cast your burden upon him, and he will sustain you." Oh, what a Saviour you have! And, mark the phraseology here, "I will sustain you;" not "I will take it off." Oh, no. He will bear you and it; and it will press you closer to his bosom. As to your speaking in love-feast, or other social meetings of the church where a testimony for Jesus is called for, I think if you hold yourself in readiness to do the whole will of God, exercising your judgment in the matter, and saying in your heart, "Lord, what wilt thou have *me to do*?" you will not much mistake your duty. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light," saith the Saviour. It may be very well though for us to look at the matter a little. And we may ask ourselves, Is it right that we should have such meetings? Are they, or have they been, a benefit to the church? Do they promote her spirituality? I believe the uniform testimony of all competent judges,

from the earliest days, of that form of Christianity which we call Methodism, is for the affirmative to these questions; therefore, I shall spend no time in arguing them, and shall only refer to what would appear to be individual duty. If these meetings are to be sustained, I think the obligation falls equally on all who know Christ as their Saviour. And I believe one reason why "many are weak among us, and many sleep," is because they refuse to embrace these opportunities of witnessing for Jesus, simply because there is a cross in it. Oh, what a shame that any one who looks upon the cross of Christ should refuse to be his witness because there is a cross in it! I have heard some say, If I could speak like such a one I would always speak. Does not this savor, a good deal, of pride? My sister, I hope you will never let such an unworthy sentiment find a place in your breast. As Mr. Fletcher says, "Pray for the gift of utterance," and you will, when you are determined to bear Christ's cross, have as much of it as will enable you to speak intelligibly of his goodness. Your

object is not to make a pretty speech; it is to "magnify God with the new tongue of praise." If you are tempted to think that what you say profits nobody, never mind that; at suitable opportunities cast your mite of praise into the Lord's treasury, and leave it with him. If the suggestion comes, people will think you are fond of hearing yourself; when you do not trespass on their time and patience, you have the consciousness, in your own breast, that, if so, they are mistaken, and you can leave your case with Him whose testimony you bear; it will be perfectly safe there. I don't wonder that it is discouraging to you—very discouraging—to see old professors in whom you have confidence silent on these occasions, and that you think it looks like forwardness in you to speak; and I know that this greatly increases the cross. But, my sister, if you would walk in the light, and have fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and have the Holy Spirit for your abiding Comforter, you must look singly at what God requires of *you*; and you know when he gives you an

opportunity ; and the call is made for Jesus' witnesses, your duty is plain ; and you are not to mind what others do. Be determined, in the strength of the Lord, to bring to bear all the influence you have got on the spirituality and profitableness of the meeting, and leave others to settle the matter with their own consciences. But I cannot help thinking that many, especially experienced Christian females, deprive themselves of much enjoyment, and act as hindrances to the weak, and make heavier the burden to those who will bear it come what may, by withholding the influence of their example in this matter, and the power of their testimony. I often think it is a great pity that it is so. O, my sister, fix your eye on Jesus, and let the cry of your heart be, Show me my duty, and aid me in its *performance*. Take the Bible for the rule of your conduct ; you cannot keep too close to it. If you have any impressions of duty in any matter, be sure they do not conflict with Bible teaching. I think there is, in the present day, a great proneness to overlook this. Many people

seem to look more to their own feelings than to the Divine Record for a knowledge of their duty; hence, some things are neglected which the Bible clearly enjoins, for other things which "they feel to be their duty." "Try every spirit," and if any differ from the spirit that breathes in the Divine Word, reject it. If anything is presented as a duty which clashes with what that makes a duty, turn away from it. Be in everything a *Bible Christian*, and you will be "perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

LETTER XVI.

Observations on dress—Neatness and simplicity to be observed—All affectation to be avoided—A sense of dependence to be cultivated—The love of Christ is infinite, &c. &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

The subject on which you now ask for information is one, I think, of some import-

ance; and yet one on which people generally are either too fastidious or too indifferent. I mean indifferent as to whether or not they conform to Scripture rules. There are two things that are calculated to make us regard it as not unimportant: one is, the *Bible* notices it; and the other is, it exerts a powerful influence on the minds and hearts of many professors. How many do we hear say they have not time for mental cultivation, who spend a much larger part of their time and thoughts on dress than is necessary for either comfort or decency; and how much leanness is felt in many a soul because there is much more pains taken to appear in "what is worn," than is taken to have it adorned with the graces of the Spirit! I think the Bible reproves both the followers of the world's frippery fashions, and those who prescribe a certain mode and certain colors as the religious style, and condemn those who do not conform to it. Its rules are general, and condemn what is showy, expensive, and immodest; but while *it* leaves the Christian with these general directions, to the exercise

of his enlightened judgment, and the influence of a sanctified heart, who is he or she that is wiser than the divine spirit, and assumes the right to erect a standard to which all must conform? Neatness and simplicity, I think, should be the characteristics of a Christian's dress.

“Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation
Upon thy person, clothes, and habitation,”

says one, and I think the outward appearance should resemble the state of the heart; but does it not look rather inconsistent to see a Christian, who professes to be dead to the world or dying to it, adorned with useless ornaments or the silly frippery of fashion? Again, since the religion of Christ is light and beauty, and all the figures that are used in the Bible to represent it convey the idea of glory and beauty, is it consistent to require those who have it in their hearts, to wear dull and gloomy colors? “The King's daughter is all glorious within.” Is she to look gloomy and cheerless without? The redeemed in heaven are clothed in *white robes*, but are the redeemed on earth to be

required to wear drab, or mouse, or some such color? My sister, those who talk to you thus, however good and sincere they are, bring down religion to a level far below its own. God made the sun, and it makes the colors; none can be more religious than another. It is true, gaudy colors can only be worn to attract notice, and this does not look much like the modesty in apparel which the Bible enjoins; consequently, I think they will be avoided by the meek followers of the Saviour. They have never been considered, by the standards in etiquette, to be in good taste, and they have always characterized persons of unenviable reputation. But God made the "human face divine," and he made it beautiful; it cannot, therefore, be that his religion forbids you to wear what is simple and becoming. We talk of the redeemed in heaven blooming in immortal youth. Why, then, should we suppose that religion is intended to make young persons dress like old persons? Those who think, since you profess to have found Christ a Saviour from all sin, you should assume a singular appearance,

cannot support their statements by either reason or Scripture. To me it looks very much like the Pharisees making broad their phylacteries, and is an affectation of sanctity which should be avoided. If any one prefers a certain mode of dressing, he or she has a right to do so; but not a right to require others to do so. God has beautifully carpeted the earth on which we tread, and he has surrounded us by innumerable beautiful sights, and in all these things he has combined beauty and utility. Ought not this to teach us that we should do so too? A dull, gloomy appearance is perfectly consistent in a monkish ascetic, whose religion consists chiefly in self-imposed austerities, and a contempt of the good things which the Great, Benevolent Father has given us to enjoy. It harmonizes with the monastic cell, but not with the heart which is a temple of the Holy Ghost, adorned with the graces of the Spirit. The world belongs to the Christian—not to abuse, but to use—and you know to use anything is to employ it properly to accomplish the purpose for which we have it; and to

abuse it would be to pervert it from that use. Dress, and everything worldly is the true Christian's servant, not his master. He makes it answer the purposes of comfort and decency, but he will not allow it to control him. No one who walks in the liberty of God's dear children, will allow dress or anything else to interfere with his Christian liberality, or with the cultivation of his mind and heart. A distinguished Christian writer says: "When either men or women spend much time, cost, and attention on decorating their persons, it affords a painful proof that *within* there is little excellence, and that they are endeavoring to supply the want of mind and moral good by the feeble and silly aids of dress and ornament."* But, in all these things you will have the light of the Spirit to guide you; only be careful to keep "a single eye." No one can exactly judge for another. Look narrowly into your heart; scrutinize all your motives, on your knees, before God, and you will be able to decide what is proper for *you*. I rejoice that

* Clarke's Com.

he gives you to see, with increasing clearness, your dependence upon him, and your obligations to him. We cannot have too lively a sense of either. We need this to keep alive our gratitude, and to cause us to cleave to him. There is but little, indeed no fear of us departing from him when this is kept up. It is forgetting our momentary dependence on God, thinking our mountain stands strong, and ceasing to watch and pray, that renders us a prey to the enemy. You now find that "love makes all things easy." Sink deeper, launch out farther in this ocean of love, and you will find duty still easier. O, my sister! what a boundless, fathomless ocean of love is in Christ! Here we may dive, and plunge, and drink to all eternity, and raptures ever new, and wonders ever increasing, and delights ever thrilling, shall captivate our adoring souls. Bound every heart, and every bosom glow with celestial fire! let every tongue be employed in the praises of him who raises us to such glorious privileges! May you, my sister, go on in the enjoyment of them.

LETTER XVII.

The beauty of holiness—It brings power to resist temptation—Personal experience—There is a grief caused by the separation of friends that is not inconsistent with resignation—It is a great salvation to be saved from unnecessary self-reproach—The unction of the Holy One will teach all things, &c. &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

I greatly rejoice on account of the establishment in love to which you seem to be daily attaining. Holiness is beautiful in itself, because it is God-like. There is concentrated in it all that is excellent, all that is lovely, all that is ennobling. Sin degrades, but holiness dignifies. God is holy, and he is the centre and source of all that is lovely, all that is desirable. The higher degrees of holiness we attain to, the more we become like him. You now find that it brings with it a power to resist temptation; and, also, that things that would before have been a

temptation, are none now. Your inordinate creature love is crucified; you now love all things in Christ, and only as they lead to him; therefore, what you know leads from him possesses no charms for you; there is no beauty in them, that you should desire them, for Christ is to you, "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the "altogether lovely." But, my sister, you have but begun to see its beauty. It will keep unfolding new charms to you every day you walk in it. You will grow more and more out of love with the world you have left, and in love with the charms of the blessed Jesus as he continues to make communications of himself to you, which he will do while you abide in him. You shall often be constrained to exclaim—

"Mine eyes with joy and wonder see
What forms of love he bears to me!"

May you go on, in the name of the Lord, until an abundant entrance is administered unto you, into the kingdom above! and, "as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance

of a man his friend ;” and we are encouraged to persevere, by hearing of the sweet waters of salvation which have refreshed others by the way, and the heavenly manna on which they have fed, I have selected some of the sayings of a fellow-traveller, thinking they would be profitable to you. On one occasion she writes : “ This is the Sabbath. Precious day ! Oh, how sweet are earthly Sabbaths ! then, how sweet will be the heavenly one ! This afternoon my soul was fed and feasted on divine things. In prayer I felt as if admitted into the presence-chamber of Jehovah. Oh, how awfully solemn seemed the place ! I felt that I was permitted to ask of him what I would, and it would be granted. This freedom of access filled my soul with solemn reverence. I felt the awful responsibility of the hour, but it gave me great power to plead, both for myself and others, and in my own case, my prayer was answered. Glory to God ! ” Again : “ Yesterday was the communion Sabbath, and truly it was a glorious day to me ; my soul was filled unutterably full. While I attended the service, my Lord

gave me an inexpressibly sweet view of the inheritance reserved for me, and of my privilege in the gospel here on earth, all as the consequence of the application of that precious blood which was shed for me. My whole soul was absorbed in the heavenly vision; so that for some time I could only weep tears of gratitude and love, and breathe to him aspirations of praise. The pearly gates seemed folded back to admit me, and my blessed Saviour seemed to say, in accents unutterably sweet: 'Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!' 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away!' Oh, how insignificant did crowns and kingdoms appear to me! My whole heart replied: I will go up, and possess the good land; for, in Christ's strength, I am well able. I feel a reaching forward—a pressing upward. My soul seems to spread her wings and rise; she soars to the upper regions of Christian experience, and cannot be content to dwell among clouds and mists. I would lie in deep humility at his feet, and, in order to do so, I feel I must go on receiving more of God; for the more I

receive, the lower I get at the foot of the cross." Again: "My soul has of late felt uncommon simplicity; knowing nothing but as he teaches, not knowing where to go, but as he directs. Feeling no desire to know what will be the result of things, but simply to be led by the divine Spirit, assured that all will be well; and it is astonishing how the Lord, from time to time, brings light out of darkness. Glory be to his holy name!" Again, on the 4th of January: "I have now closed a happy year of my life, indeed the happiest, and entered upon its successor. On reviewing the past year, gratitude seems to absorb my soul. I can truly say, I never before lived a year with so lively a sense of nearness to God at all times, and such entire reliance on his word. I have for a long time had no doubt of the faithfulness of my God, or of his love to me; and I could say, I love the Lord with all my heart, and all my actions are governed by love to him; yet, conscious of my imperfect judgment, I have sometimes thought, when difficulties arose, they were the consequence of my own un-

intentional impropriety; and I have been greatly puzzled in trying to find out where the impropriety lay. But, glory to God! Jesus shows me that when I act according to the best light I have, ever looking to him for direction, I am to believe he does direct me, *because he has promised to do so*, whether I have any special conviction of it, or not. And oh, how sweetly does this relieve my mind of care! I can truly say—

‘Jesus doth my burdens bear,
Jesus takes my every care.’

I now enter on a new year with feelings of child-like confidence. I feel no desire to know what my Lord will do with me, or to what sacrifices he will call me. Entire confidence not only excludes all anxiety, but every desire to know what is in the future, any further than it may be necessary for the right directing of my present course. This state might not be so difficult to attain to, if temporal prosperity surrounded me; but, that is not the case. If I were to judge humanly, things would look discouraging

indeed. I bless the Lord, he supplies my present wants, and keeps me sweetly relying on his *word* for the future. I feel that I am a whole burnt-offering laid upon the altar. I dare not belong to any foreign power. I feel jealous for the Lord God of hosts; and, as he has the right to me, I am anxious that he should have all my powers employed in his service. But, what condescension that he should accept me at all! Oh that he may help me to show forth his praise, and to recommend the sprinkled blood!" Thus, you see, he leads his people from strength to strength; and he will do so until "every one of them appears in Zion before God." Let it be your ambition to walk in close companionship with God, and you will receive from him, from day to day, the testimony that you please him. Sometimes his ways may seem to you dark and mysterious, but remember you are called to walk by faith, not by sight. "What you know not now, you shall know hereafter." There is nothing wrong in feeling, exquisitely, separation from those we love, provided we do

not murmur against God. Religion has nothing to do with destroying the finer feelings of our nature: on the contrary, it renders them still more delicate. The blessed Jesus did not chide the sorrowing sisters when they wept at the grave of a beloved brother. No! but he mingled his tears with theirs before he exercised his omnipotence in the resurrection of his friend and theirs; and thus gave an eternal reproof to stoicism!

“The tear must fall to nature due,
And let it fall.”

But, don't forget to mingle with your sighs and tears, “Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt!” “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!” Neither is there any sin in desiring, in submission, to be saved from the bitter draughts of life which are sometimes presented. Our blessed Lord said: “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass!” But, it was not possible for redemption's plan to be carried out, except he drank it; and oh how quickly! does he add, Not as I will, but as

thou wilt; and he took the cup, and drank it to the very dregs. Religion destroys none of our passions, or affections; it only purifies them, and causes all to flow in their proper channel. The rightly considering this, would save us a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and self-reproach. Mr. Wesley says: "It is a great salvation to be saved from unnecessarily condemning ourselves." Too many are ready to "daub with untempered mortar; but, there are others who are prone to deal too severely with themselves; the Spirit of God alone can enable us to steer a steady middle course. To watch over our hearts with a godly jealousy; and, yet, avoid condemning what God does not condemn. You, my sister, will have this Spirit to abide with you continually; to lead you into all truth, so that you will not need any one to teach you the way of living near to God (that is, they will not be absolutely necessary to you); for the "unction of the Holy One will abide with you, and you shall know all things," necessary to Godliness. That you may be as "Mount Zion that cannot be re-

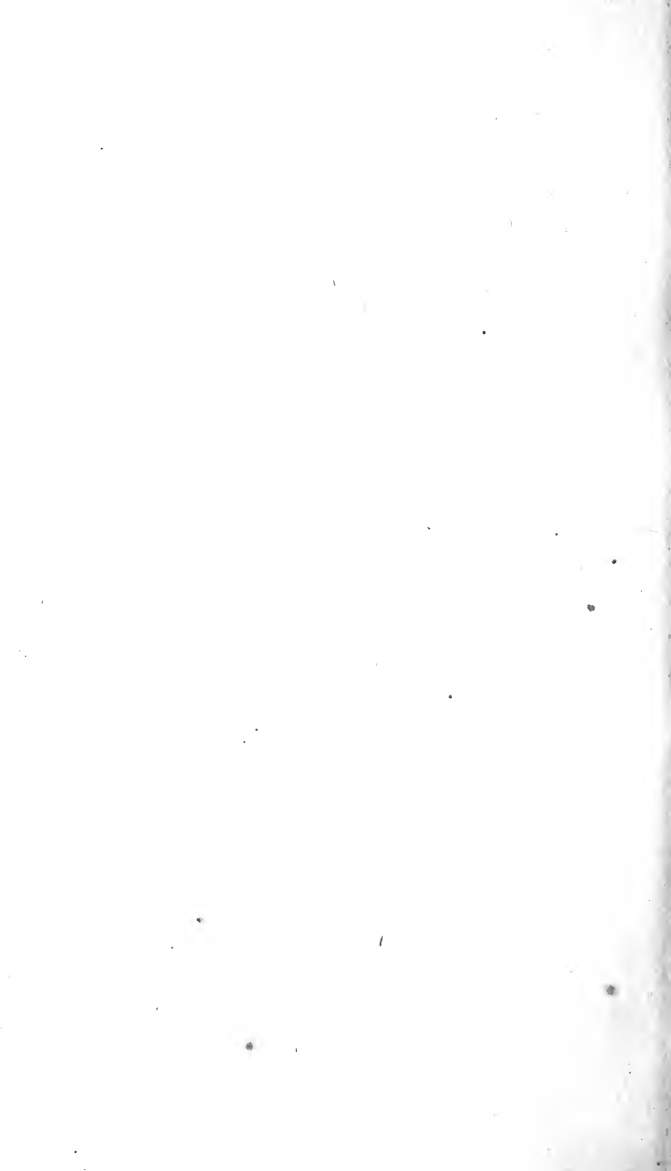
moved." "That you may abound yet more and more in wisdom and in all knowledge. That you may be sincere, and without offence until the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God!" is the prayer

OF YOUR FRIEND.

THE END.

25 Jan 1860.









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